

MARYLAND

HISTORICAL MAGAZINE



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MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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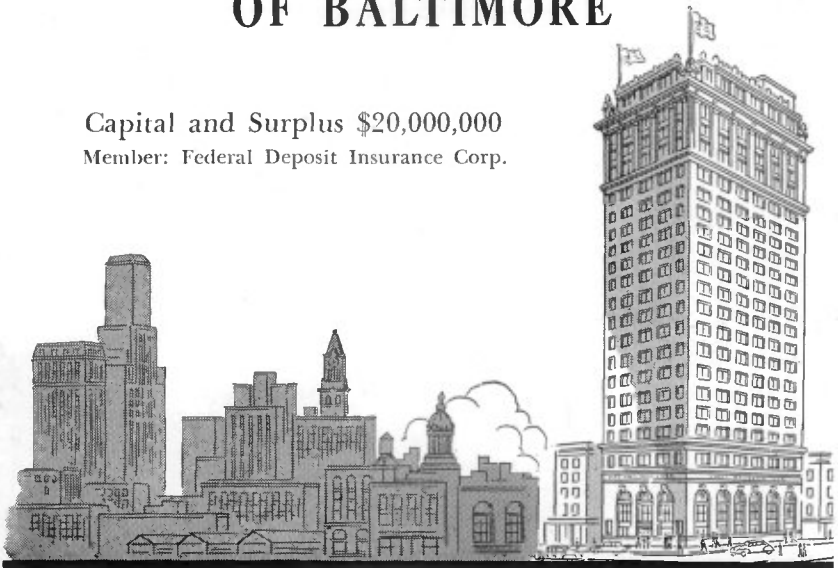
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BRANTZ MAYER, MAN OF LETTERS

By JERRY E. PATTERSON

IN the parlance of the nineteenth century literary world, Brantz Mayer (1809-1879) was called, even by himself, a "littérateur"; in the less kind twentieth century he might even be referred to as a "hack."¹ He practiced law regularly most of his life, was occasionally a newspaper editor, and, briefly, a diplomat, but he was always a writer. He was able to keep up these other vocations while, with the ridiculous facility of the time, he continually published on a number of disparate and even conflicting subjects.²

¹ The only articles on Mayer I have seen are those obituaries published soon after his death in places like the *New-England Historical and Genealogical Register*, XXXIII (1879), 363-364, and *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, VIII (1877-1880), 15-18, and one in much the same style by Bernard C. Steiner, "Brantz Mayer," *MdHM*, V (1910), 1-22.

² Detailed bibliographies of Mayer are in Joseph Sabin, *A Dictionary of Books Relating to America* (1868) and S. Austin Allibone, *A Critical Dictionary of English Literature* (1897).

Some of his works commanded much critical attention at the time and had considerable sales. He fits comfortably into a category with the label "minor literary figure, mid-nineteenth century" and thus rubricated, his career will be followed by means of his unpublished letters and other documents.³

Genealogy was one of Mayer's hobbies and his last publication was a family history in which he displayed a lineage of the most awesome respectability. The Mayers, he found in his researches, were an "honest, educated, industrious race."⁴ His father, Christian Mayer, was a German immigrant to Baltimore, a successful tobacco importer, who was said to be "sober, honest, industrious, well educated, but unimaginative, conservative, and in all things in accord with the tradition of his Lutheran extraction . . . a man among whose hundreds of carefully copied letters not one touch of humor appears."⁵ Brantz Mayer, who was born in Baltimore on September 27, 1809, was also highly respectable, but he had considerably more verve than his father.

At St. Mary's College, a Sulpician school in Baltimore, Mayer got his first education which, judging from his writings, was only average. In his books on Mexico, he showed an anti-Roman Catholic bias which caused rather a stir among the reviewers at the time, but he always remained an interested alumnus of the Catholic St. Mary's and his unpublished Mexican journal shows that he looked into some affairs for the school while he was in Mexico. After St. Mary's he studied law at the University of

³ The present article is based on manuscript materials in the Maryland Historical Society (the main collection), the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, the Detroit Public Library (Burton Historical Collection), the Yale University Library, the Peabody Institute Library, the Harvard University Library, the New York Historical Society, the University of Kentucky Library, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Pierpont Morgan Library, and the John Carter Brown Library. To the librarians of these collections I owe great thanks for their help and permission to publish materials.

⁴ Brantz Mayer, *Memoir and Genealogy of the Maryland and Pennsylvania Family of Mayer, Which Originated in the Free Imperial City of Ulm, Wurttemberg, 1495-1878* (Baltimore, 1878), p. 174. In the Maryland Historical Society collections is a correspondence between Mayer and A. J. Steinman, of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, which shows that most of the genealogical research for this family history was done by Steinman. See also William H. Egle, ed., *Notes and Queries . . . Relating Chiefly to Interior Pennsylvania*, Annual volume, 1898, pp. 129-130, and Harriet Hyatt Mayer, *The Mayer Family* (Annisquam, Mass., 1912).

⁵ Alfred G. Mayer, "Biographical Memoir of Alfred Marshall Mayer, 1836-1897," in National Academy of Sciences, *Biographical Memoirs*, VIII (Washington, 1916), p. 243.

Maryland and was admitted to the bar in 1832. He went to China and India in 1827-1828. In the collections of the Maryland Historical Society there is a manuscript diary of this trip entitled "Memoranda and notes on a voyage to China by Brantz Mayer, 1827-1828," which is an eighty-five page record of his travels. Most of the space is occupied by long and not very relevant quotations from Lord Byron. The one unaffected part of the journal concerns his not wholly disinterested efforts to get acquainted with a rich young lady, a "Miss Lavinia, who they say is worth \$50,000 . . . a singular girl, a mixture of gentility and vulgarity," who was sailing on the ship with him. Apparently he failed to get to know her well, as she is not mentioned again. In 1832-1833, he made a trip to Europe, visiting his German relations. Two years after his return he married Mary Griswold, a Georgian, who bore him five daughters before her death in 1845.

After his marriage Mayer seems to have about equally divided his time between his legal practice and writing for newspapers in Baltimore (*American* and *Sun*) and New York (*Mirror* and *New World*). He began to know many of the leading journalists of the quarrelsome newspaper world of the time, two in particular: Nathaniel Parker Willis, an extremely prolific and popular essayist who has left some reputation,⁶ and Park Benjamin, an ill-tempered poet and newspaper man.⁷ Both of these men corresponded and visited regularly with Mayer for years. He was also on friendly terms with such authors as John Pendleton Kennedy,⁸ Fitz Greene Halleck, and George Pope Morris.⁹

Mayer was active in Maryland Whig politics as a follower of David Hoffman. When the Whigs came into office in 1841, Mayer was due to be rewarded with a diplomatic post. He was nominated for the secretaryship of the American legation in Mexico after the fashion of the time, when such posts often went to literary men. The nomination was put before the Senate in September, 1841. Mayer was not happy with it. "My anxiety is for Europe. Why could I not go to Madrid or Berlin . . . ?"

⁶ Their quite full and informative correspondence is in the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library and in the Yale University Library.

⁷ See Merle Hoover, *Park Benjamin, Poet and Editor* (New York, 1848). Benjamin's papers are in the Columbia University Library and many of his somewhat biting and impatient letters to Mayer are in the Maryland Historical Society.

⁸ Some of Mayer's letters to Kennedy are in the Peabody Institute Library.

⁹ A few of the Mayer-Morris letters are in the Yale University Library.

he wrote to Francis Markoe, Jr., of the State Department. In the same letter he complained: "I have for the two or three last days been engaged in making inquiries in relation to the expense of living, style, etc. in Mexico with regard to my removal to that city with my family. I regret to tell you that the accounts of a very judicious friend who resided there many years frighten me greatly, and I fear prudence will oblige me to decline the appointment entirely. The expenses of house rent, living, equipage (which last is indispensable) are enormous, so that although it may be quite the thing for a very young bachelor, it is by no means suitable for a married man."¹⁰ When the nomination was approved, however, Mayer accepted it, and since it was too expensive to take his family, he decided to go alone. He wrote his decision to Markoe on September 21, 1841, adding: "I have had a bid for a book and one for correspondence from New York."¹¹

The lure of raw material for a book could not be resisted. N. P. Willis, with the practiced eye of an inexhaustible journalist, had seen the rare opportunity when the appointment was first mentioned. He wrote to Mayer: "I congratulate you with all my heart on your success in diplomacy, and I think you will find more that can be made use of hereafter in Mexico than you could have done in Europe. I would rather go to Mexico myself. Take care to collect material for a clever book when you return, and it will pay, particularly if you give it a strong bearing on Texas."¹² Mayer's many other literary friends agreed that the trip would have happy results. John Neal wrote from Portland: "I rejoice at your prospects and have only time now to say that I shall write instantly to several persons advising them to engage you if they can. Don't be in a hurry, therefore, in closing with any proposal."¹³

Except as a political reward, there was no particularly good reason for giving Mayer the Mexican post; his languages did not include Spanish (he learned it in Mexico), and his previous travels had been in Europe and the Far East. However, he made some effort toward finding out about the country before he left the States, and it was at this time that he began his collection of

¹⁰ Mayer to Markoe, Balt., Sept. 13, 1841, NYPL.

¹¹ Mayer to Markoe, Balt., Sept. 21, 1841, NYPL.

¹² Willis to Mayer, Glenmary, N. Y., Sept. 15, 1841, DPL.

¹³ Neal to Mayer, Portland, Me., Sept. 12, 1841, MdHS.

books on Mexico which was to become noteworthy. He spent almost exactly a year in Mexico, November 10, 1841, to November 14, 1842. The elaborate journal which he faithfully kept and later in part published is now in the Coe Collection of Western Americana in the Yale University Library. It does not indicate that his diplomatic labors were strenuous; in fact, a few hours of copying despatches each day is all he appears to have done. He had ample time for visiting prominent Mexicans, making sight-seeing trips out of Mexico City, poking around ruins, and for endless sketching and note-taking for the book he planned. He acquired a knowledge of Mexico and its antiquities which was to last his lifetime and, thinned out, was to fill numerous publications. This year in Mexico, which made him an expert on the country by the standards of his time, was a highly profitable one for Mayer.

On his return to Baltimore, Mayer worked rapidly to complete from his notes, sketches, and diary his book on Mexico. All his friends were waiting for it: "I have trumpeted your return and announced a book from you on Mexico. Is it true?" wrote Willis.¹⁴ *Mexico as it Was and as it Is* was published in 1843 by John Winchester in New York. Park Benjamin undertook to act as Mayer's agent in the negotiations with the publisher. He wrote Mayer: "Mr. Winchester and myself have this morning entered into a calculation with regard to the expense of producing 15,000 copies of your work on Mexico. After paying for engravings requisite, etc., the profit would be about \$600, of which we are willing to pay you one half, \$170 already paid. This indeed is no good compensation, but as we assume the risk of sales, it is as much as can be afforded."¹⁵ Even granting the higher purchasing power of money at that time, this seems a small sum indeed to the author on so large an edition, but Mayer took it with only token complaint. Public interest in Mexico and its history was high as United States-Mexican political relations worsened; this was the year also of the tremendous success of W. H. Prescott's *The History of the Conquest of Mexico*. Mayer's book sold well, but there were annoying troubles with the publisher. Benjamin wrote to Mayer in 1844 that he thought Winchester "unsafe" and advised Mayer

¹⁴ Willis to Mayer, N. Y., Dec. 23, 1842, DPL.

¹⁵ Benjamin to Mayer, N. Y., Jan. 6, 1843, MdHS.

to get the plates away from Winchester and republish the book himself in parts.¹⁶ Mayer had to pay \$300 for the plates, which seems to have wiped out his small profit. He appears to have held poor Benjamin partly responsible for this misfortune and their correspondence became acrimonious for a time but without destroying the friendship.

Mexico as it Was and as it Is was undoubtedly widely read before and during the United States' war with Mexico. General Benjamin Alvord years later wrote to Mayer's widow: "I did myself devour eagerly his *Mexico* in the City of Mexico during the Mexican War, and was thus able to appreciate its accuracy and its great merit."¹⁷ The book gained a permanent place in the bibliography of nineteenth-century Mexico. There were many travel books, but Mayer's is superior to most. Only Henry G. Ward's *Mexico in 1827* (London, 1828) and Madame Calderón de la Barca's famous *Life in Mexico* (New York, 1843) are better. Though we now know that Mayer's archaeology was a compilation of inaccuracies, it was considered valuable at the time, and for thirty or forty years the book was an important source for research on Mexico. Adolph F. Bandelier, the archaeologist of New Mexico, wrote in 1876: "Have taken home with me the third edition of Brantz Mayer's *Mexico as it Was and as it Is*, a charming work and very valuable indeed. In regard to history he is, of course, grossly ignorant, but then there are so many details of real life, and especially so much upon the antiquities of the Valley of Mexico and surroundings that it is better than anything else I know of, Humboldt not excepted."¹⁸

The style of the book is arch, enthusiastic, and redundant. In a recent Spanish edition, the translator says that "the language of Mayer is smooth, correct, and rich,"¹⁹ but reading it in English today one is mainly struck by its immense need of editing. Mayer himself knew he was wordy. He once wrote to a nephew a comment on some of the latter's work to which he added: "Only one criticism I have to make and that is as to style, and on a point

¹⁶ Benjamin to Mayer, N. Y., June 23, 1843, MdHS.

¹⁷ Benjamin Alvord to Mrs. Brantz Mayer, Wash., Mar. 8, 1879, MdHS.

¹⁸ Bandelier to Lewis H. Morgan, Highlands, Ill., Dec. 7, 1876. Printed in Leslie A. White, ed., *Pioneers in American Anthropology. The Bandelier-Morgan Letters, 1873-1883* (Albuquerque, 1940).

¹⁹ Juan A. Ortega y Medina in *México lo que fué y lo que es*, tr. by Francisco A. Delpiane (Mexico, 1953), xlii.

on which your father was very defective as a writer and speaker and which I have been trying always to correct myself. I mean a tendency to redundancy of words and a disposition, now and then, to repeat an idea in other words, or to illustrate it too much."²⁰ With all the faults which we see today in the book, the successful publication of *Mexico as it Was and as it Is* gave Brantz Mayer a better place among his contemporaries who read and wrote literature and history.

A letter to Francis Markoe, Jr., indicates that Mayer was scheduled and anxious for another diplomatic post after his return from Mexico. He says: "I thank you for your kind wish to see me placed in the diplomatic corps. That of course is out of the question so long as the present wicked creature [John Tyler] is at the head of the government. After the most lavish professions of confidence in me, and anxiety to place me in a suitable situation (made personally), he has left me, since my resignation, in April last, without another commission. . . ." ²¹

His major work on Mexico done and without hopes of another diplomatic post, Mayer turned again to writing for newspapers and editing, off and on, the Baltimore *American*. There seems to have been scarcely a topic on which he could not turn out an article, as the titles of some which are in manuscript at the Maryland Historical Society indicate: "The Dollar Yardstick," "Beatrice Cenci," "Libraries and Authors," and "Hopes for the Ambitious Poor." In 1844, Mayer was the prime mover in the effort to found an historical society for Maryland. He was already active in organizations such as the first American Ethnological Society, the New-England Historic Genealogical Society, and the Rhode Island Historical Society. As early as 1840, he had written to Joel Roberts Poinsett to know if South Carolina had an historical society and, if so, what were its rules, etc., because "some gentlemen in Maryland want to establish a society which will rescue the mouldering remains of our own state's early history from utter decay . . ." ²² After the successful founding of the Society he kept up his interest in it and was president and secretary at

²⁰ Mayer to Alfred Mayer, San Francisco, Dec. 30, 1872, MdHS.

²¹ Mayer to Markoe, Balt., Aug. 26, 1843, NYPL.

²² Mayer to Poinsett, Balt., May 13, 1840. Partly printed in *Calendar of Joel R. Poinsett Papers in the Henry D. Gilpin Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1941), item 307.

various times, and the Society published some of his oddly assorted works.

When the war between the United States and Mexico finally came, Mayer was quick to capitalize on the public's interest by bringing out a *History of the War Between Mexico and the United States* (New York, 1848). Although two volumes were announced, only volume one ever came out. However, he already had another work planned. A few years before, he had written to Markoe: "My plan is to gather all these accounts [of Mexican antiquities], make drawings of every ancient relic, vessel, utensil, implement, etc. that I can hear of or see, get all the plates of ruins and fortifications, classify the whole geographically, connect them with the Toltec and Aztec remains, and in the course of the next ten or twelve or perhaps fifteen years, bring out a work on the subject."²³ Most of the research for the book could be done in his own large library, but he also wrote to Secretary of State John Middleton Clayton, asking permission to consult official documents in the State Department for his book. "Mexico has long engaged my earnest study. I know her people, institutions, leaders, and language with considerable intimacy and should be glad to contribute in any way to draw closer the bonds of an alliance which may result in mercantile if not in political benefits to our union."²⁴ When the work was completed it contained much more than merely pre-conquest antiquarian studies; it covered the history of *Mexico, Aztec, Spanish, and Republican*, as its title asserted, when it was published in Hartford in 1851.

A recent Mexican writer has commented that Mayer's books "mark precisely the highest level of knowledge of the prehispanic past reached in the first half of the last century."²⁵ If they do, which seems unlikely, Mayer is not to be credited with a great achievement, for he really did not comprehend the archaeology of Mexico. His work consisted of presenting to the American public sections, poorly translated and badly digested, from the pioneer Spanish and German historians and archaeologists whose

²³ Mayer to Markoe, Balt., Aug. 26, 1843, NYPL.

²⁴ Mayer to Clayton, Balt., Sept. 10, 1849, LC.

²⁵ Ortega y Medina, *op. cit.*, xxi. For the view that Mayer's antiquarian studies are filled with "fantastic errors," see Charles A. Thomson, "A Study of the Writings of Brantz Mayer Concerning the Calendar Stone," *El Mexico antiguo*, II (Mexico 1924-1927), 30-33.

researches in Mexico were virtually unknown in this country. His original contribution was minute, if existent at all, and he was certainly in no way ahead of his time in archaeological theory. He once wrote the diplomat and archaeologist E. George Squier, who made many original studies himself, that "the more attention I pay to archaeological studies the more I am convinced that we are to remain forever in the dark as to the history of mere monumental nations. Those countries which have possessed a recording language, now decypherable, may be fairly reasoned out by industrious men; but all those whose story is not contained even in a legible epitaph on tombs or temples, must become the subject of learned guesses which will continue to tease the ingenuity and puzzle the brains of curious antiquarians to the end of time. Such, I humbly think, is the unfortunate condition of our continent. We have no Rosetta stone to do the work of our Egypt; and even the so called Mexican manuscripts will in the course of time come to be regarded rather as the rude curiosities of a semi-civilized people than as the authentic records of their progress or glory . . . and I shall forever deny that anyone without such authority has a right to tread one step beyond into the infinite realm of symbolic coincidences." ²⁶

Mexico, Aztec, Spanish, and Republican was followed by a much less happy attempt by Mayer to initiate American readers into archaeology below the Rio Grande. *Observations on Mexican History and Archaeology with a Special Notice of Zapotec Remains as Delineated in Mr. J. G. Sawkin's' Drawings of Mitla, etc.* was published by the Smithsonian Institution, but it was afterwards discovered that Sawkins had never visited the ruins he described and had made his drawings by copying, inaccurately, those of visitors to Mitla. The book was characterized by H. H. Bancroft as "one of the most bare-faced frauds recorded in the annals of antiquarian exploration in America." Bancroft was kind enough to except Mayer from this statement by adding that Mayer "apparently consulted only Humboldt's description of Mitla, [so] it is not at all strange that this zealous investigator and usually correct writer was deceived by a pretended explorer." ²⁷

²⁶ Mayer to Squier, June 1, 1851, LC.

²⁷ Sawkins is demolished by Bancroft in *The Native Races*, IV (San Francisco, 1886), pp. 404-406.

Undiscouraged by the Sawkins setback, Mayer continued to busy himself with matters relating to Mexico. As a "corresponding member of the Comisión de Estadística de México" he wrote to Senator James Alfred Pearce asking his help in getting published by the United States Senate a report by Lieutenant Martin Luther Smith of the Corps of Topographical Engineers upon the drainage of the Valley of Mexico, "one of the most interesting geographical features of the world. . . ." ²⁸ He translated from Spanish Castañeda's "Journal of the First Visit Paid from the Capital of New Spain to New Mexico," which he offered to Henry Rowe Schoolcraft for publication in one of his books on the American Indians. Schoolcraft took with it the usual editorial liberties he allowed himself when making up his volumes, which caused lasting hard feeling between him and Mayer. "I hope Congress will not allow any more volumes from him, but will put the subject into the hands of a really fair man," ²⁹ Mayer wrote to Squier irately.

In 1851, Mayer rewrote the old story of Michael Cresap and his murder of the family of Tah-Gah-Jute, or Logan, a famous incident in the border wars between the white settlers and the Indians, "which has been made history by Mr. Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia*." Colonel Cresap, according to Jefferson, was responsible for the deaths of Logan's family on the Ohio River in 1774. After the publication of the story in the *Notes on Virginia*, Luther Martin of Maryland attacked Jefferson, saying that Cresap had been falsely accused. In 1800, Jefferson published an appendix in which he withdrew the indictment of Cresap, but at the same time he refrained from printing a letter which he had just received from George Rogers Clark wherein Clark specifically asserted that Cresap had no part in the crime. Half a century later Mayer published Clark's letter for the first time in *Tah-Gah-Jute* and said Jefferson was wrong in deliberately withholding this evidence. Mayer's purpose, as he wrote to James Fenimore Cooper, was to "make out a case in favor of the trauced but meritorious Marylander. I have taken pains to discover all the now acceptable authorities and hope I have not failed to

²⁸ Mayer to Pearce, Balt., Mar. 22, 1850. Printed in *MdHM*, XVI (1921), 157-158.

²⁹ Mayer to Squier, Balt., Oct. 10, 1854, LC.

cleanse his memory from some of the blood with which history has bedaubed it. In Maryland there are still many of his family and descendants who yet suffer under the blight of his attributed cruelties."³⁰ Mayer gained a good deal of prestige by this work, and *Tab-Gab-Jute* was published more than once. Recently, however, Mr. Irving Brant has shown that Mayer himself knew of contemporary evidence which "utterly discredited" Clark's narrative but which was omitted by Mayer in order to strengthen his attack on Jefferson. Brant justly wonders whether "one may ask who sinned more, Jefferson by suppressing a letter which he knew to be a glossing of the facts, or Brantz Mayer by suppressing the whole mass of contemporary evidence which proved Jefferson guilty of nothing but understatement."³¹

The project of repatriating the American Negroes was one of Mayer's interests: he thought that Liberia was the answer to the problem of slavery in the United States, and out of this interest came his most unusual and most popular publication. In 1854, he published a work entitled *Adventures of an African Slaver. Being a True Account of the Life of Captain Theodore Canot, Trader in Gold, Ivory, and Slaves on the Coast of Guinea: His Own story as Told in the Year 1854 to Brantz Mayer*. This was, or was supposed to be, the true life narrative of a slave ship owner, taken down from Canot's own lips and put by Mayer into his involved prose, not to gratify "an scandalous curiosity," he said, but to make plain a moral by showing the horror of such a life. Moral or no, the book had at least twelve editions within two years from the date of its first publication and must have made money for Mayer, as he indicated in a letter to Squier: "I wish you would (par hazard) some fine morning, ask Appleton's how my book goes and let me know their *real* humor about it. It has sold, I find, largely, but they don't seem to have distributed at the South, where it ought [to] sell like hot bread. I feel that it is a good argument and that its ethnographic value is lost in the story. I'm sorry, though the pennies are some balance for philosophy."³²

³⁰ Mayer to Cooper, Balt., July 2, 1851, Yale.

³¹ Irving Brant, *James Madison. The Virginia Revolutionist* (Indianapolis, 1941), pp. 284-290. For the unnecessarily long bibliography of this minor controversy, see Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, William Peden, ed. (Chapel Hill, 1955), pp. 298-300.

³² Mayer to Squier, Balt., Dec. 7, 1854, LC.

This book has had an amazing publishing history. In this century new editions have been published in English (1928), German (1942), Portuguese (1946), and French (1946).

With all the literary work outlined above Mayer still had time for his law practice during the 1850's, and his correspondence with Squier indicates that again he was being thought of for another diplomatic post, this time in Honduras, which so little appealed to him that he wrote Squier: "I see very little to be gained by an ambassador who shall establish his legation on the back of a mule, and after the fashion of poor [John Lloyd] Stephens, wander over the land in search of a government! I do not think that any mere diplomatic appointment ought to induce me to quit my present mode of life, etc. to visit and dwell in such a place of Honduras. I saw, with all your efforts to make the best of a bad affair, that what I had read of that country was true; and although I should always be most happy to be serviceable to my friends, I consider it hardly worth your while to mention my name to the Government in unison with this mission."³³

On January 20, 1855, Mayer was appointed agent of the City of Baltimore in the McDonogh bequest. John McDonogh, a rich eccentric of New Orleans, had left his large fortune jointly to the cities of Baltimore and New Orleans; the estate was complicated and Mayer was occupied with it for ten years.³⁴ As the War between the States approached, he found himself with financial troubles. As he wrote to his old friend, Nathaniel Parker Willis: "a shameful bank failure here, during the week before last, has swept away at one blow the accumulations of several years and left me, at 51, a stranded wreck with very little more than \$100 of available money in my pocket . . . ! I must lose not a moment in trying, at least, if not to retrieve fortune or comparative ease, at least to keep out of debt and to make a living for the nine females dependent on me! The instrument in my hand—the pen—seems to indicate a hope; and I have, therefore, resolved to sit down, this Sunday morning, and write this note to you . . . asking your kind consideration of my case, and an inquiry, whether through your aid, I could not get an employment in New York

³³ Mayer to Squier, Balt., Oct. 10, 1854, LC.

³⁴ There are several articles on this interesting personage and his curious will, but most of them are quite uninformative. See William T. Childs, *John McDonogh: His Life and Work* (Baltimore, 1939).

either in literary or political writership which would give us from \$2,000 to \$2,500 a year for the present.”³⁵

John Bigelow, the editor of the New York *Evening Post*, suggested that Mayer might attend and report on the convention then about to meet in South Carolina (which had already declared itself out of the Union) to form a constitution. He wrote R. B. Rhett, Jr., of the southern extremist Charleston *Mercury* to see if there would be any objection to Mayer's attending. Rhett replied that “no agent or representative of the *Evening Post* would be safe in coming here. He would come with his life in his hand and would probably be hung.”³⁶ Understandably, such a statement was enough to keep Mayer at home in Baltimore, though he said his refusal “was not founded on timidity but on a prudent apprehension of all dealings with a half crazed society, exalted by political passion and in a sense, of inability to do my whole duty to you in discharge of a liberal recompense. Your letter, with Rhett's remarks, has made me ten-fold more anxious about the South! It is a frightful despotism.”³⁷

In Baltimore Mayer found employment writing for newspapers. He was not without literary influence in a day when newspaper “puffs” for authors were all important. Among his correspondence are rather pathetic hints or downright entreaties that he do his best to build up a book, for instance in this note from Francis Parkman, sending a book “published yesterday,” which was *The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century* and telling Mayer “I should like to have the Baltimore public made aware of its existence and if you can do anything in the way of a notice to that end I shall be much obliged.”³⁸

When war came, Mayer was faithful to the Union and on March 12, 1863, he received a commission in the United States Army as an additional paymaster. He served in Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Louisiana. After the war, it was again suggested by someone that Mayer might enter diplomatic service and return to Mexico. He wrote to Anna Ella Carroll of Baltimore: “I should have liked to go to Mexico eight or ten years ago very

³⁵ Mayer to Willis, Balt., Nov. 11, 1860. Printed in John Bigelow, *Retrospections of an Active Life* (New York, 1909), I, 300.

³⁶ Rhett to Bigelow, Charleston, Nov. 14, 1860. Printed *ibid.*, I, 303.

³⁷ Mayer to Bigelow, Balt., Nov. 23, 1860. Printed *ibid.*, I, 306.

³⁸ Parkman to Mayer, Boston, May 27, 1867, MdHS.

much, for it is a country I much admire, though I can't say so much for the people. If my dear old friend Clay had been president, I would have been sent there without asking. I am now paymaster with the regular army and doubt whether they would give me a leave of absence to accept a mission. But, as the Mexicans say, *Quien sabe?*"³⁹ Though Mayer thus refers to Clay, their surviving correspondence by no means indicates that Clay would have overturned Washington to get Mayer a post. In a very brief note on this subject Clay ends by politely "Regretting that you, who are so conversant with Mexican laws and history, and otherwise are so well qualified to serve the public, have not been employed abroad in its diplomatic service, I am, . . ." Mayer's enthusiasm for great men seems sometimes to have magnified his contacts with them in his mind.

Such appears to have been the case with Mayer and the historian Jared Sparks. Mayer claimed, in a memoir of Sparks that he wrote after the historian's death, that he knew Sparks well, but their correspondence as preserved in the Harvard Library and the Maryland Historical Society displays no particular intimacy nor any significant exchange of information, and it is well known that in his old age Sparks would correspond with anybody. Mayer sent copies of his memoir of Sparks to a large number of famous men of the day (Emerson, Longfellow, etc.) and received from them conventional replies which he later had bound up elaborately with a copy of the memoir and presented to his second wife, Cornelia (Poore) Mayer, on October 7, 1872, Spark's birthday.

Upon the reorganization of the Army, Mayer was made a lieutenant colonel (1867) and was sent to California as paymaster. He remained in San Francisco for five years (1870-1875). He found that "California is a very uncivilized country in spite of what active paid eulogists and egotists say about it."⁴¹ Of course he thought about writing a book, to be called *Friscan Photographs and California Sketches*. He wrote his nephew: "Now I have lots of materials out of which I could cook an edible book about California, not exactly a book of travels or of statistics or of instruction, but a book that would be San Fran-

³⁹ Mayer to Anna Ella Carroll, Balt., Oct. 7, 1867, MdHS.

⁴⁰ Clay to Mayer, Wash., Feb. 20, 1850. Margaret I. King Library, U. of Ky. (courtesy of Prof. James F. Hopkins of Clay Papers).

⁴¹ Mayer to Alfred Marshall Mayer, San Francisco, Feb. 17, 1871, MdHS.

ciscan photographs of land, people, and prospects . . . I think I could give a champagnish head still to the contents of my ink-pot: a head which would be not entirely froth, but denote the spirit within that could exhilarate without intoxicating! Ahem!"⁴² Such a work was never issued, though, and Mayer did not again venture into the world of literature.

On his return from California to Baltimore he worked on his collections of books and autographs, which had assumed large proportions, and amused himself by compiling a genealogy of his Mayer relations, doubtless inspired by the fact that three of his eight daughters had now married and were starting families. He died in Baltimore on February 23, 1879.

After describing the career of a writer like Brantz Mayer, at the conclusion one is unable to point out any sort of principle that guided his long life of producing books, except opportunism. Mayer was not really an historian like Sparks, not really an archaeologist like Squier, not a professional traveler like Stephens, not an editor, not a diplomat. He was, to use a word loved by nineteenth century intelligentsia, an "antiquarian," and perhaps his own chosen title of "littérateur" is the most apt that can be attached to him. In the introduction which he wrote to the 1928 edition of *Captain Canot*, Mr. Malcolm Cowley referred to Mayer as "one of those admirable nonentities who had learnt the art of being important."⁴³ This is unfair. He was not a nonentity in Maryland, though he may have failed to become a national literary figure of importance. He was a prime mover in establishing the Maryland Historical Society, and it was through his initiative that steps were taken to preserve the official records of the State of Maryland.⁴⁴ He must be judged against the times in which he lived as well as for the lasting merit of his histories. The academic professional historian had not yet emerged, and it was through a long line of popularizers such as Mayer that a public interest in American history was created.

⁴² Mayer to Alfred Marshall Mayer, Balt., July 24, 1875, MdHS.

⁴³ *Adventures of an African Slaver*, ed. with intro. by Malcolm Cowley (New York, 1928), p. xx.

⁴⁴ See Brantz Mayer, *Letter to Governor A. W. Bradford on the Examination, Classification and Partial Arrangement of Some of the State Papers of Maryland Belonging to the Proprietary, Royal, and Revolutionary Periods* (Baltimore, 1866).

UNION MILLS, THE SHRIVER HOMESTEAD

By FREDERIC SHRIVER KLEIN

UNION MILLS, the Shriver homestead in Carroll County, is one of Maryland's unique historical landmarks. Now grey and weathered with age, it still has the distinctive air of gentle serenity and friendliness left upon it by more than a century and a half of Maryland history.

Since the last months of Washington's administration in 1797, members of the same family have lived in the homestead. Their written records, their folklore and family legends, and the house itself with its contents, have preserved an unusual firsthand history of the evolution of American life from the days of creaking ox-drawn wagons to the modern era of rushing highway traffic. There have been additions, extensions and minor alterations to the interior and the exterior, but it is the continuity of ownership and occupation by the descendants of the original family which gives the old twenty-three room home its unique quality.

The most important result of this constant replacement of older generations by younger generations in the same location is that very few of the personal possessions of each generation have been scattered, for there was never a period when the old house was completely emptied in preparation for a new owner. As each generation provided its new fashions in tools, toys, books, utensils and furnishings, there was always an older generation to preserve the familiar and treasured relics of its past, even if they were relegated to the safety of a vast and gloomy attic. This unbroken stream of historical experience seems to give the homestead itself something of the kind of wisdom that comes with age, for its atmosphere conveys the impression that it would not be surprised at anything, because it has seen everything.

It has seen wars ever since 1812, and young men have often waved good-bye at the front gate, returning later in uniform to celebrate a joyous home-coming with music in the low-ceilinged

rooms and dancing on the smooth, oak floors. Soldiers in blue and grey and khaki have rested on its long porch. It has had hurricanes and storms tearing at its oak clapboards and chestnut shingles, but warm sunshine always followed a few days later. Children have come there to school to do their sums on slates, stage-coach travelers have stopped for warm food and comfortable shelter, and traveling carnivals, itinerant tin-ware peddlers and donkey-drawn hurdy-gurdies have stopped in its front yard. From the front porch, politicians and political candidates have extolled the virtues of Jeffersonians, Jacksonians, Whigs, Republicans, Democrats and local option.

The Shriver homestead and the Shriver mill began as outposts of early expansion into Western Maryland. Two brothers, Andrew and David Shriver, built the house and mill in 1797, when the opening of western frontiers under the Federal Constitution was offering tempting possibilities for pioneer commercial ventures. Their father, David Shriver, Sr., was well known in Maryland's political history, having been a member of the Revolutionary Committee of Safety, a member of the Maryland Constitutional Convention, and a member of the legislature for thirty years. He was married to Rebecca Ferree, a granddaughter of Mary Ferree.

A letter written to Andrew Shriver on June 27, 1793, from a friend in Georgetown, shows the early pattern of an American dream which was to influence much of the nation during the nineteenth century. Andrew's friend wrote:

I would strongly advise you to take a perfect view of the Monocacy, so as to ascertain with precision the extent to which practical navigation can be extended. If there, make a purchase of a few hundred acres of land, lay off a town and commence trade there. You will soon draw settlers and make it a place of consequence. Navigation will be opened this fall above Fredericktown, and will very soon be carried to the greatest practicable distance, at which place the produce for the distance of twenty or thirty miles must be brought for exportation.

Following this advice in general, the Shriver brothers bought a large tract of land along Big Pipe Creek, about seven miles north of Westminster and along early roads leading into Littlestown and Pennsylvania's roads toward the west. The junction of Pipe Creek and Deep Run furnished a strong flow of water for a mill in the wide valley, and gentle slopes on either side provided land for grazing, farming or settlement. Heavy stands

of black oak would furnish tanbark for a tannery, and the Shriver knew a good bit about tanning leather. At this time, Andrew Shriver was operating a store and tavern in Littlestown, Pennsylvania, and David was practising as a civil engineer in Maryland.

The original mill contract shows that on January 25, 1797, the two brothers completed arrangements with John Mong, a Frederick County millwright, to construct "a set of mills," a grist mill and a saw mill. On March 13, Jacob Keefer and John Eckert contracted "to mould and burn a kiln of brick" for the mill, "providing 100,000 brick or more, to be paid for at the rate of one French crown for every thousand brick." The brick kiln was constructed near the creek, known in previous years as Pipeclay Creek.

The house had its origin on January 26 of the same year, when a contract was made with Henry Kohlstock of York County, Pennsylvania, for building a small double house as a residence for the two brothers. Kohlstock, a joiner, agreed "to finish two small houses 14 by 17 feet each, to be connected by a porch and passage about 10 feet wide." Each house had one upper and one lower room, with a connecting center hallway and a small porch in front, twelve by eight feet. The carpenter's bill for labor gives an interesting idea of costs in 1797:

Lower floors for small house.....	5 dols.
Upper floor, rough.....	3 dols.
Windows, casing, frames and sash.....	2 dols. each
Doors, casings, etc.....	2 dols. each
Weatherboarding, stairs, porch, cornice, seats, washboards	3 dols.
Painting	6 dols.

The total labor costs for the house came to eighty-six dollars!

From these four rooms, the large rambling homestead with twenty-three rooms developed during the next century. The placement of odd wings along the sides resulted in a Z-shaped floor plan. But the original part of the building in the center remains unchanged, including the charming original balcony. The Shriver brothers, like their father, were actively interested in politics, and were followers of Thomas Jefferson and his newly formed party. It was not strange, therefore, that when they built their little double house, they copied the distinctive and decorative Chinese lattice balcony design used at Monticello for their balcony

porch railing and inner hall banister. Their little log and clapboard house was certainly a far cry from Jefferson's mansion, but for the Shriver brothers, it was their "Monticello," and the contrastingly elaborate white railings attested to their political loyalty in an unusual fashion.

Their two mills, the gristmill and the sawmill, operated through the union of the brothers, suggested an appropriate name for their enterprise, "Union Mills." The crossroads settlement became known as Union Mills, a name which has remained to identify the surrounding community to the present day. But the operation of the mills required more settlers, and settlers usually followed better roads. When the Jeffersonians came into office in 1801, Andrew used his political influence to secure a postal route through his crossroads and was appointed postmaster by Postmaster-General Gideon Granger. His brother David had become a capable civil engineer and was appointed superintendent for the construction of the Reisterstown road, which passed by the Shriver mill, and eventually connected with Pennsylvania's road to Pittsburgh.

The little double house was soon to prove too small for the large families which were characteristic of nineteenth century households. Andrew Shriver was one of eight children and father of eleven children born at Union Mills. Andrew and his brothers and sisters had a total of 265 grandchildren, many of whom lived at or visited Union Mills.

A west wing was added and an out-kitchen was built around a huge stone fireplace. For the operation of a tannery, a bark-shed, vats, handling and storage sheds were constructed on the other side of the millrace. A blacksmith shop and a cooper shop were built near the mills. Since farming was always necessary, a large barn, with a carriage house, stalls for horses and cattle, haymow, granary and threshing floor, was built along the road. Slaves, indentured servants, apprentices and hired labor from nearby settlements provided the manpower for the operation of the mills, the tannery and the farm. A small settlement of tenant houses and small farm houses spread down along the road. Waggoners brought bark and hides to the tannery, and grain and logs to the mills.

The homestead became, normally and naturally, a kind of small manor-house in a manner quite typical of the American

village which developed in the nineteenth century near iron furnaces, tanneries, plantations and similar specialized enterprises. The members of the little community found it a center for many of their needs and activities. In its earliest years it became, of necessity, a general store and an inn where either travelers or waggoners might stop when roads were impassable, or while waiting for grain to be ground. A small stock of dry goods, notions and general merchandise made the homestead a convenient place to visit, and a stock of liquor was a necessity for any store in those days. When the postal route was authorized, it was natural that the little store would also become the local post office, and a little cabinet with eight pigeonhole compartments was ample at first for the mail that came by the post rider or stage for Union Mills.

When Andrew's political activity secured him an appointment as Justice of the Peace, the homestead provided an office for legal business, and copies of deeds, indentures and contracts began to fill wooden boxes. The children of the family, local apprentices entitled to schooling, and families of nearby neighbors needed a school, so schoolmasters were employed for the winter months, using one of the low-ceilinged rooms in the house for a classroom. Early political rallies in this remote area of Frederick County needed a well-known location, and certainly the crossroads at the site of a mill, post office, inn, store and magistrate's office was an ideal and accessible location. The little Monticello balcony was a perfect platform for public speeches and the determined Jeffersonians must have felt quite a thrill as they stepped out on the little upper porch, gazed down on the upturned faces of the people standing on the mossy brick pavement and the yellow graveled roadway, and began their fluent appeals with the familiar salutation, "My fellow-citizens."

People were almost always there, waiting, as the heavy wagons stood in line in front of the mill and the creaking hoist hauled sacks aloft or grain was shoveled into the chute. While mules or horses nuzzled their feedbags, the waggoners gathered inside the gate of the homestead about the big wooden "cucumber" pump, swinging its heavy handle up and down to wash the dust and sweat from their faces and hands, or to sluice a few cups of cold well water down their parched throats.

In the next generation, the house was expanded again with a

long extension and wing, this time to the east, making it almost three houses under one roof, and always with several families in occupancy. As changes were made, modernization and alterations brought about some contrasts between the old and the new. Split-level floor construction took place as an architectural necessity rather than as a home-builder's promotional device. The house began to assume some of the aspects of a museum of historical evolution. Old rooms were sometimes abandoned completely, or used as storerooms, without changes of any sort. When rooms were given up by older people, they were refurnished or redecorated in the fashion of a newer period.

As a result, the present house contains functional structures and furnishings from the Federal, the ante-bellum, the late Victorian and the early twentieth century periods. However, the styles are not confined to particular areas, and any one room may contain examples of furnishing or detail from each of the four periods in comfortable and practical confusion.

Heating, for instance, is provided for in one old kitchen by the original huge stone fireplace, about eight feet wide and five feet high, but in an adjoining room, the open fireplace has been filled in with a Franklin stove, a considerably more efficient device. But the next generation preferred various types of ten-plate or parlor stoves and bricked up their fireplaces, so that many of the rooms display these ornamental wood-stoves with their jointed lengths of blue-black stovepipe. By the 1900's, central heating became more desirable and part of the homestead is heated by conventional hot water radiators. However, all four types of heating are still practical necessities for the various parts of the house in which they are located. There must always have been someone who refused to allow the "modernization" of the house to the extent of replacing a perfectly satisfactory "old-fashioned" piece of equipment.

The same evolution is illustrated in many other ways. One of the fashionable types of musical entertainment for the home in 1800 was the parlor barrel-organ. One corner of the old "dancing-hall" contains this wheezy but slightly musical instrument, originally made in Germany and imported from England. It played waltzes and lancers while a patient servant turned the curved brass handle. Each spike-studded wooden "barrel" would play about eight tunes, and some forty-eight lead and wooden pipes, animated

by a see-saw leather bellows, provided tunes reminiscent of a bag-piper's band. In the 1810's, "live" music came into its own, and fiddles, purchased from Baltimore importers, always hung on the wall. In the years just before the Civil War, the ballroom was graced with a big square Steinway, which is still standing where it was placed a century ago, very little the worse for age or wear. On its ornate music rack are copies of "The Flag with 34 Stars," and a schottische composed in 1858 called "Our American Cousin," by G. W. Beckel, for a play which President Lincoln was to hear at Ford's Theatre a few years later. Letters from the homestead describe a scene at this piano on the night of June 30, 1863, when the Fifth Corps of the Army of the Potomac made their headquarters at the house, before their march to Gettysburg. A member of the family wrote:

General Barnes had about a dozen young men on his staff . . . About half a dozen of them, with Sis, Kate and myself, got in the parlor after supper where we spent a very pleasant evening. Sis and I gave them a few pieces on the piano and violin, with which they seemed to be greatly pleased. Several of them sang "When this Cruel War is Over," but they did not do it justice. . . .

The next night, July 1, 1863, the cruel war was over for many of the young men of the Fifth Corps at Gettysburg, but it was just another incident in the life of the old Steinway.

A few years later, a thrilling new instrument was procured—a magnificent Swiss music box, with a glistening brass cylinder and twinkling silver teeth. Its dark polished wood case was richly inlaid and its twenty-four inch cylinder could play six different tunes, beginning, of course, with the newly popular "Beautiful Blue Danube Waltz." But on a shelf in another room, symbols of the minstrel show era were ready for use—the banjo, bones and jewsharps. And, to indicate the turn of a new century, another room contains a return to the mechanical device, after a full century—a sturdy, spring-driven Victrola, with an assortment of records ranging from the golden voice of Caruso to the first raucous rhythms of the original Dixieland Jass Band. The interesting feature of these instruments is not so much that they are there now, but that they have been there since they were first popular and have been in continual use.

Timepieces show the same historical sequence. A grandfather's clock, made by Hostetter of Hanover, just touches the low ceiling

of one parlor. But other rooms and hallways are enlivened by the ticking of various timepieces—all once in vogue—a tall mahogany mantel clock in one room; a stubby little mantel clock in another; octagonal wall clocks with little painted doors in hallways and kitchens; a cuckoo clock chirping away every half-hour in another room; and on the outside wall of an old tannery building, facing the rocking chairs on the long porch of the house, there is a unique timepiece which has been a landmark for almost a century. It is a whitewashed segment of the board wall about four feet in radius, serving as a sundial by the addition of a pole fastened through a hole in the wall and hand-made Roman numerals of wood, from VIII to III. It can be clearly seen from the long porch, from all the front windows, from the mill and from the road. Its slowly moving shadow has marked the time for countless chores and duties and pleasures for hundreds of people who became accustomed to a quick glance at the white dial on the weather-beaten grey boards.

From the standpoint of architectural construction, the homestead presents the same stages of evolution. In the oldest rooms of the original double house, the low ceilings, wide oak plank floors studded with handmade nails or wooden pegs, hand blown window panes with bubbles and distortions, and wooden-pegged door and window frames remain unchanged. Later alterations and additions disclosed the sturdiness of the original construction, for the squared oak logs, chinked with clay, that form the wall structure have stubbornly resisted efforts to drill, pierce, cut or saw. Seasoned oak, after one hundred and sixty years, does not lend itself easily to alterations.

Later additions to the house show differences in construction. It is easy to see where a new part of the house was added without much regard to alignment, symmetry or pattern. A door was cut through the log and clapboard wall, usually not more than six feet high because of the difficulty of sawing out an extra log, one or two rooms were added, and a roof attached in the most convenient fashion. The original two chimneys increased to six, and in the twenty-three rooms which developed from the original four, there were forty-four doors and seventy-two windows. Ceilings in the additions were a little higher, and better heating made it possible to have more windows, thus providing more light in the newer parts.

Almost every room has some distinctive history of its own. One busy little room on the first floor of the original building was a post office as early as 1804, and a magistrate's office, a general store, a schoolroom and an innkeeper's office in rapid succession. A long room on the west end of the house was built as a formal dining room, with a warm Franklin stove installed in the open fireplace. Underneath a long family table capable of seating sixteen or eighteen people, a turkey-red carpet covered the oak floor. However, as generations moved, married or died, the old dining room was no longer needed, and it gradually became a useful but cluttered workshop, with rough board shelves, storage space for "safety" bicycles, lawnmowers, rifles and shotguns, a workbench with vise and tools, and plenty of room for anything from cans of axle grease to a small press for printing visiting cards, tickets or small circulars for neighborhood enterprises. But the old turkey-red dining room carpet remained on the floor of the workshop for almost fifty years, covered with grease, sawdust and paint spots, until the room reached its present status—a summer kitchen, with an electric range facing the old Franklin stove.

The present dining room went through the same process in reverse. It was originally a "utility" room between two portions of the house, and was used for laundry, butchering, sausage-making, or preparing fruits and vegetables for winter storage. Another generation made it into a charming room with a lovely view into the garden through a leaded glass bay window.

The old parlor, or "dance-hall" was once the public-room for travelers at the inn, and one of the many letters from the collection of Shriver papers relates that when the stage was running on the turnpike, which was then the chief mode of travel for passengers going west from Baltimore or east from Pittsburgh, Washington Irving spent a night at the homestead.

Grandfather then kept a hotel at this place, and Irving stopped here one Saturday and remained over Sunday. He sat by the stove in what we call the 'dancing-hall' and talked with grandfather till after 12 o'clock at night. Sunday was a rainy day and it was not fit weather for going out, and Mr. Irving was kept indoors.

Irving slept in one of the little upstairs rooms, and it has always been thought in the family that his description of a rainy Sunday at a country inn in *Bracebridge Hall* may have been based on his view from the windows at Union Mills.

Hardly a single room in the old house has not gone through a succession of different functions. An old smokehouse with a large chimney alcove became a slightly more modern kitchen; two bedrooms became bathrooms; little rooms occupied by negro slaves became clothes rooms, trunk rooms and storerooms.

All of these changes in architecture, furniture and use of facilities would present a mass of unrelated confusion if it were not for another unusual circumstance. The Shriver family kept diaries, journals, memorandum books, ledgers and notebooks with all the patience and detail of medieval chroniclers. They preserved letters written to them, copies of letters written by them, patented copy books, photographs and clippings. Equally important is the fact that most of them wrote with considerable literary skill, and with as much attention to accuracy and detail as though they were professional journalists. From this large collection of documents and records, beginning in the 1780's and continuing in various forms with few interruptions until the 1940's, it is possible to discover and to verify, from firsthand sources, almost all of the events, affairs, ideas, emotions, business dealings, household and family matters which concerned their lives from Washington's time to the twentieth century. The most assiduous diarist of the family kept a careful daily record from 1872 to 1944, including comments and data on family and local, state, national and world affairs.

From this unusual collection of records, it is possible to reconstruct many past aspects of American life such as slavery, for instance. Like many Maryland estates, Union Mills always had a few slaves as personal or household servants. In 1802, a family of five negroes trudged up to the gate and presented the following letter from Andrew's brother in Frederick:

Andrew Shriver

Union Mills, Frederick County

With a negro woman slave and 3 children—

(I have given the black people 15/ to bear their expense.)

Dear Brother: This will be handed to you by a negro family that I have ventured on purchasing for you. The family consists of a Negro woman named Minta, and her three children, the eldest a boy named Jesse, the next a girl named Cassa, and the third a boy named David. The husband of the woman, an old man of the name of Sam, a freeman, accompanies the woman and would be glad to be employed by you. I bought them from old Governor Johnson, who intends selling all his negroes to pay his debts.

The bargain for these people is this—the amount to be paid is £170. I shall have to pay down £85 and the residue to give my obligation to pay in three months.

Everybody that has seen this family consider them a very great bargain. Harry Sterner bought a boy the other day scarcely so big as the little girl for which he gave £60. I would not be afraid to get £70 for this boy of yours without any difficulty. Major Hall bought a crooked, misshapen boy some time since and he gave £85. The woman is in the prime of life, being 26 years old. She was brought up as a house servant in James Johnson's family, and turned out for breeding at the commencement thereof. Were I disposed to trade in human flesh, I could before night get £200.

Strange and unpleasant as this matter-of-fact message sounds today, the attitude was conventional in many households of that era. In a later diary, we learn that "Little Black Dave shot off the old double barrel gun and shot into the partition and blew down Dan Eckert's violin and broke it to pieces!" Little Dave must have been somewhat mischievous, for a few years later, a diary contains a note "Black Dave absconded, after a dispute with William." A printed circular of 1809 offers thirty dollars reward for the return of Peter, a Negro, described as "speaking German nearly as well as English; brought up to do plantation work, but can do a little at blacksmithing, shoemaking and carpenter's work, and has some knowledge of making gun barrels." He also "played on the fiddle and fife tolerably well." With such qualifications, Peter was too valuable to lose.

Letters and diaries reconstruct Civil War days at Union Mills with fascinating personal descriptions. They make it possible for us to live through the two exciting days of June 29 and June 30, 1863, when the isolated rural household witnessed the passing of two great armies on their way toward a chance meeting at the quiet village of Gettysburg, a few miles to the north. By this time one of the Shriver family, William Shriver, had built another house a few hundred yards away from the homestead, and, as often happened in Maryland, the two families supported opposite sides in the war. William's family had four soldiers in the Confederate Army; Andrew's family had two soldiers in the Union Army. All were close cousins and childhood playmates.

On the afternoon of June 29th, two Federal soldiers rode furiously down the hill towards the mill, shouting, "Pack up and leave! The Rebels are coming!" Union troops were retreating from a skirmish with Jeb Stuart's cavalry in Westminster. Rumors

had been so numerous for the past few days that the household did not take the warning seriously, but early in the morning on June 30th, a Negro slave, Ruth, awakened the house with the news that the rear yard and orchard hill were full of men and horses. Stuart's cavalry had arrived and swarmed over the countryside like bees. The homestead occupants were Union supporters, but outside of the customary demands for horses, no appreciable damage was done to property. However, Confederates crowded about the old stone fireplace in the kitchen, while Ruth hastily poured pancake batter on the iron griddle and the hungry soldiers snatched the cakes away before she had time to turn them over. General Fitzhugh Lee wandered into the orchard and went to sleep under an apple tree, while youngsters in the house crept up to gaze with awe at the "General with the black beard." Soldiers broke into the tannery, taking some leather, and made half-serious threats to take members of the Union family with them unless they turned over their horses. However, Southern sympathizers in the village told the Confederates where the Shriver horses had been hidden in the woods. General Jeb Stuart was entertained for breakfast at William's home across the road, and took a few minutes after a hearty meal to entertain his hosts by singing, "If you Want to be a Bully Boy, Join the Cavalry!"

The Confederates departed later in the morning, headed north across the old Pipe Creek bridge toward Hanover. They had hardly disappeared over Pipe Creek Hills when Sykes's Fifth Corps of the Union Army arrived at Union Mills. They camped on the meadows and hills, to spend the night along Pipe Creek, where Meade had just decided to assemble the Union lines for a major battle. General James Barnes, a division commander, and his staff were invited to make their headquarters at the homestead, and girls in the household were thrilled by the presence of young officers and thousands of men. They entertained the officers in the old dancehall with music and games, while campfires began to glow all over the surrounding hillsides, and soldiers bathed in the cool clear waters of Pipe Creek. General Barnes slept in the little room which had been once occupied by Washington Irving, and officers stretched out on the long porch to sleep through the warm June evening. One of them made friends with a little dog at the homestead named Frank, and was given the dog to take along with him, but what became of Frank at Gettysburg is unknown!

Early in the morning on July 1st, the entire army moved north, having turned the tables on Southern sympathizers in the neighborhood by taking their horses away this time. For the next three days, heavy cannonading told the story of the unexpected meeting of the two armies at Gettysburg. Wagon trains of wounded, lines of stragglers and prisoners filed back past the mill and the homestead for days. The old bricks near the mill door still bear the bullet scar where a soldier was shot a few days after the battle, after an altercation with a drunken straggler.

Details of this sort, by themselves, are perhaps not unusual, but the records of activities at Union Mills are equally complete for almost every phase of life during the nineteenth century. There are detailed instructions for arranging a political barbecue, complete with benches, beeves and the advice, "Above all, use nothing but whiskey!" There are records of early plans to organize the new county of Carroll out of Frederick County as early as 1833, four years before it was finally formed, and notes of the speeches Andrew Shriver used to address meetings in English and in German on the expediency of forming the new county. There is a detailed account of the first trip of an RFD Postal Wagon in the United States, which originated in Westminster and made its first stop at the homestead on December 20, 1899. It was accompanied on the first trip by Louis E. Shriver, who photographed the wagon, and kept a careful record for his own information of the route and the times of arrival at various points.

Members of the family who lived temporarily or permanently in nearby cities sent letters describing affairs of national interest for the folks at the homestead. A few examples illustrate the variety of information:

THE EMBARGO

Washington, Dec. 30, 1805: The Federalists, anxious to bring about a war with any nation, and by any means, will vote unanimously in favor of the present measure, but the Friends of Peace and payment of the national debt (Jeffersonians) seem rather inclined to try the experiment of a non-exportation and non-importation agreement and to see how that will operate upon the gentlemen over the water.

THE FIRST RAILROAD

Aug. 26, 1830: I rode out on Tuesday with Alderman Cooper in his steam carriage to the $\frac{1}{2}$ way House on the railroad. Altho the experiment was made under many disadvantages, the thing performed very well, and



UNION MILLS

Photo by Jack Engeman

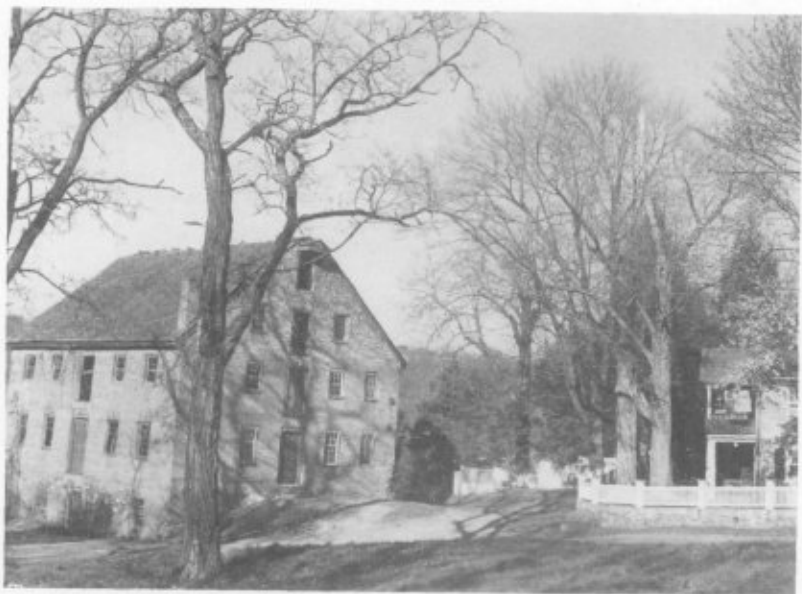


VIEWS OF UNION MILLS, LOOKING NORTH (left) AND WEST (right)

Photos by Jack Engeman



REAR OF UNION MILLS



THE MILL

Photos by Jack Engeman



FIREPLACE IN WEST WING

On the way to Gettysburg, "Confederates crowded about the old stone fireplace in the kitchen, while Ruth hastily poured pancake batter on the iron griddle and the hungry troops snatched the cakes away . . ." (p. 301).



PARLOR OR "DANCE HALL "

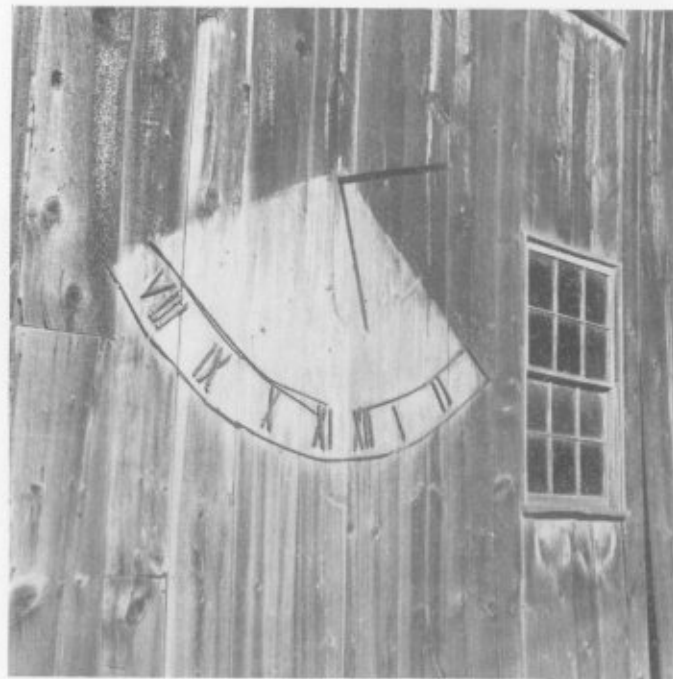
Room in which General Barnes was entertained on his way to the battle of Gettysburg. On the right of the Steinway piano is the wooden barrel organ made about 1800.

Photos by Jack Engeman



FRANKLIN STOVE

Over the mantel are Civil War firearms. Above the stove are old cast iron muffin pans. This stove is in the old west dining room, now a summer kitchen.



SUNDIAL

"... on the outside wall of an old tannery building, facing the rocking chairs on the long porch of the house, there is a unique time-piece which has been a landmark for almost a century." (p. 297).

Photos by Jack Engeman



POST OFFICE ROOM

The desk contains the original pigeon holes for mail. On the shelves are 19th century children's toys and household tools. On the floor is a "carpet bag."



SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY

Part of the original house. The rail shows the Chinese lattice design used also on the balcony outside (see Cover).

Photos by Jack Engeman

run rapidly upon straight lines. I really think we attained a speed of 20 miles an hour upon the stretch through Gadsby's field. At any rate it ran so fast as to terrify the whole party.

THE TARIFF OF 1833

Feb. 22, 1833: Mr. Clay made a very handsome speech a week or two ago. Mr. Calhoun replied to him that he would vote for the bill, which was immediately pronounced a bargain between them, and of course as an action that drew forth many remarks from the Senators, especially the Southern folks who did not seem pleased.

THE ELECTION OF 1876

Nov. 11, 1876, Philadelphia: The election news has assumed quite a different look this morning and it seems as if Hayes stood an equal chance with Tilden. General Grant was present at the Centennial. He issued a proclamation in which he said the country could afford to have either candidate elected, but it could not afford to have the returns tainted with the suspicion of fraud and recommended that committeemen from both parties go to Louisiana and see that there is a fair count.

The most interesting information from the Shriver papers is that on American home life in past ages. There are scores of descriptions of social and recreational affairs, from winter sleigh-rides and skating parties to summer picnics, strawrides, parlor games and singing societies. There is a vast collection of information about household matters, such as the preparation and storage of food for the winter, recipes exchanged constantly with visitors and friends, and about all the chores associated with a self-supporting rural household in the process of transforming cattle, hogs, poultry, grain, fruits and vegetables into stores of food for a large family. There are complete records of the operation of a tannery for almost a century, from the buying of dark oak tanbark and the soaking of hides in lime vats to the marketing of finished sole leather.

We can easily picture many summer evenings at Union Mills, when a family of ten or twelve gathered on rocking chairs or on the lawn near the front porch, as the rumbling of the mill wheel died away, leaving the entire valley quiet and poised for dusk, with only the music of crickets, treefrogs, birds, and the occasional bass grunt of a bullfrog in the millrace. Vicariously, we can share in the excitement of busy preparation for scores of holiday dinners and family meetings, when twenty-four pound turkeys were being killed and dressed, grey-pink hams and streaked flitches of bacon

taken from hooks in the big screened storage box, jars of string beans and corn and tomatoes brought up from shelves in the cool dark cellar, apples and potatoes and carrots and turnips brought from the vegetable bins, green coffee beans roasted in the oven, and then ground by a youngster struggling to hold the little fragrant grinder between his knees. Cakes of ice were uncovered from the damp sawdust of the icehouse on the hill, where they had been buried last winter after the ice on the millrace had reached a thickness of six inches, and were crushed into the wooden ice cream tub for a half hour of vigorous turning. A windlass over the back porch well brought up a dumbwaiter from the shining depth, stacked with jars of milk, little tubs of freshly churned butter, bowls of cream cheese and perhaps a few melons. Someone had to run back and forth to one of the wooden pumps, bringing water for cooking, and for the big wash-pitchers standing alongside of the china wash basins in the bedrooms. Someone had to roll little pats of butter between corrugated wooden paddles. Someone brought cobwebbed bottles of homemade blackberry wine or cider from the cellar. Someone had to select an assortment of pickles, relishes, preserves, spiced pears and branded peaches, watermelon pickle or chow-chow from the tremendous variety of jars in the pantry. The aroma of fresh-baked bread came from the corner by the stove, while schnitz, mince, and pumpkin pies browned in the oven.

It was all there, but it took a whole army of helpers, young and old, almost forty-eight hours to get it all together and prepare it, and there was always something for everyone to do. Finally, after the fragrant cooking aroma had become almost too much to bear, fifteen or twenty people gathered about the long table, to bow their heads in prayer before the oldest member of the family picked up the long carving knife and whetted it on a long steel with rhythmic strokes.

These are descriptions of the personal family life of the homestead, but from the same records, it is possible to see an example of the change brought about all over nineteenth-century America by the transition from an agrarian to an industrial civilization. Union Mills was a fairly prosperous, entirely self-sustaining estate, with a mill and a tannery operating successfully during the first half of the century. The little village of Union Mills provided plenty of cheap labor, at from five to eight dollars per month for

tannery workers, and even after the Civil War, ten cents an hour would pay for temporary help. One of the Shriver family began a project for canning foods, and built a small canning factory a short distance further down the millrace.

But the post-bellum era, from 1865 to 1890, brought tremendous changes and new problems for the self-supporting community. Cheap labor disappeared. Railroad expansion and consolidation sounded a deathknell to small industries isolated from the iron rails. Although handmade wooden machinery in the mill, the tannery and on the farm was adequate before the war, it could not stand against the more efficient postwar iron or steel equipment and had to be replaced. The new machinery had to be purchased. The mill had its big overshot wheel replaced with metal turbines, and its big wooden gears rested quietly, but larger mills near larger areas caused its business to decline, and it operated primarily as a local convenience. Scrub oak and yellow pine and locust and sumac pushed their way into the edges of fields and along fencerows where it was no longer possible to keep all the farmland in crops.

When a windstorm blew down the big brick stack of the tannery steam boiler, the century-old industry which had sold leather to West Point Military Academy as early as 1815, was finally abandoned. The B. F. Shriver Company moved its growing cannery to Westminster, near the essential railroad lines, and its building at Union Mills stood forlorn and empty. The long lines of wagons no longer stood before it in the summer, laden with sweet corn, tomatoes, peas and beans. Finally, in 1942, the old mill, oldest water-powered mill in the country to be operated by the same family, shut the watergate to its turbines, and its machinery was sold for needed World War II scrap-iron. Its rear wall had fallen and was temporarily boarded up, but its interior construction of sturdy 12x12 posts and 3x8 joists was as solid as when it was built.

The homestead lost its busy families, as young folks moved away, and old folks left to live with them. For a period of recent years, the house was occupied only by a patriarch in his nineties and a widowed niece in her seventies, with the assistance of a faithful caretaker who had come to the homestead as a young man of twenty, and spent almost forty years in the maintenance of the home and its surroundings.

But the end is not yet, and the old homestead stubbornly continues some of its traditions. It was always in a state of dual ownership from the day two brothers built it, and it has come at present into the ownership of three brothers, descendants of the original Shrivvers. It is still a residence, with a new generation making the same kind of minor adaptations and adjustments which other generations have been making for a century and a half. New documents pile up in the desks, more broken tools and toys from a new generation find their way to the capacious attics, and different problems are discussed on the rocking chairs on the long porch during the quiet summer evenings.

How long the old homestead and the mill can further withstand age, time and weather is problematical. It has been a long time since the spring of 1797, and many significant American landmarks have disappeared in the rush of modern civilization. But the old house seems to have a reassuring atmosphere of security, and it continues to be a lived-in museum of Maryland rural home life.

DANIEL DEFOE AND MARYLAND

By GEORGE E. GIFFORD, JR.¹

DANIEL DEFOE was the first major English novelist to mention the American colonies in his writings. In 1722 two novels by Defoe were published, *Moll Flanders* and *Colonel Jack*, and both mentioned Maryland. How did he acquire his knowledge of Maryland life and geography?

In order to appreciate his use of Maryland, it is necessary to analyze the geographical aspect of Defoe's writing.² Defoe had traveled all over Great Britain and most of western Europe and Spain, but he had never been to the colonies. In addition to his travels, his knowledge came from diligent study of newspapers, contacts with a great variety of men and wide reading in the large body of sixteenth and seventeenth century travel literature.³ A glance at the partial list of his library reveals the presence of a remarkable number of works of travel.⁴ In particular, the importance of the voyage of William Dampier and the autobiography of Thomas Shepard have been stressed.⁵ As Sutherland says: "Geography was clearly one of his most passionate interests. The physical world was his oyster, which he opened for himself by reading maps and travel books quite as much as by his own journeys."⁶ Therefore, the discovery of a positive source of

¹ I would like to thank Miss Dorothy Lapp of The Chester County Historical Society, Mrs. George Windell of The Delaware Historical Society and the members of The Maryland Room of The Enoch Pratt Free Library for their kind assistance. I would like to acknowledge the guidance of Dr. J. R. Moore. Especially I would like to thank my friend Mrs. Louise Fitzgerald for the use of her scrapbook; this article is dedicated to her.

² J. N. L. Baker, "Geography of Daniel Defoe," *Scottish Geographical Magazine* (Sept., 1931), 257-269.

³ A. E. Snodgrass, "Source of Daniel Defoe," *Cornhill Magazine* (April, 1939), 541-549. For Maryland travel literature see Clayton C. Hall, *Narratives of Early Maryland, 1638-1684* (New York, 1925).

⁴ G. A. Aitken, "Defoe's Library," *Athenaeum* (June 1, 1895), 706-707.

⁵ A. W. Secord, *Studies in the Narrative Method of Defoe* (Urbana, Ill., 1924), pp. 19, 20, 25-26; and Edward Everett Hale, "Daniel Defoe and Thomas Shepard," *Atlantic Monthly*, LVI (1885), 85-87.

⁶ James Sutherland, *Defoe*, 2nd ed. (London, 1950), p. 29.

information about Maryland used by Defoe in his novels is of importance in understanding the narrative method of Defoe.

Defoe was on good terms with the Friends⁷ and knew William Penn personally. Penn tried to help Defoe escape his punishment by pillory, visited him in prison in 1703,⁸ and corresponded with him. It is very likely that Defoe also read the *Journal* of George Fox, who had visited members on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in 1672.⁹ Fox's journey to Carolina through Virginia, from November 5, 1672, to January 4, 1673, his crossing the Rappahannock River, his frequent crossings from the Eastern to the Western Shore and his voyage on the Potomac, all remind one of Moll's adventures in Maryland.

In *Colonel Jack*, Defoe mentioned another aspect of early Maryland:

The plantations in Maryland were the better for this undertaking, and they are to this day less cruel and barbarous to their negroes than they are in the Barbadoes and Jamaica, and 'tis observed the negroes are not in the colonies so desperate, neither do they so often run away or so often plot mischief against their masters as they do in those.¹⁰

It is interesting to compare this to comments by Fox on slavery. The mention of Quaker characters in *Moll Flanders* also supports the possibility that Fox's *Journal* was a source for Defoe's novels.

In 1673, the first accurate map of Maryland and Virginia, by Augustine Herman, was printed in London. In the novel *Moll Flanders*, Moll sailed to Phillips Point which is located on Herman's map. It is probably the present Clay Island at the mouth of the Nanticoke River in Dorchester County.¹¹

In reviewing other potential sources for Defoe's knowledge of Maryland, it is necessary to introduce a story which cannot be documented. According to the story, in 1705, Defoe was compelled to seek asylum in the home of his widowed sister, Elizabeth Maxwell, because of his persistent writing on political issues. Three years before, he had written "Shortest Way with Dis-

⁷ E. K. Maxfield, "Daniel Defoe and The Quakers," *PMLA* (March, 1932), 179-190.

⁸ Sutherland, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

⁹ See Chapter XXI, "The American Journey, 1671-1673."

¹⁰ *The History and Remarkable Life of the truly Honourable Col. Jacque, commonly Call'd Col. Jack* (London, 1722), p. 168.

¹¹ J. Louis Kuethe, "Gazetteer of Maryland, A. D. 1673," *MdHM*, XXX (1935), 321.

senters " for which he had suffered pillory, fine and imprisonment. It was on account of this article that the Government offered £50 for the discovery of his hiding place. A small room in the rear of the building was fitted up for his private study, and it was there that his sister's only daughter (named for herself, Elizabeth) who was five years old when her uncle came to make his home with them, received her education under his teaching. The Defoes were all members of the Society of Friends and attended a meeting designated by the odd name " Bull and Mouth."

At eighteen (1718), young Elizabeth became engaged, but the engagement was broken by her mother. Unhappy, she left home and sailed for America as a redemptioner. When she was offered for sale in Philadelphia, Andrew Job,¹² a resident of Brick Meeting House, now Calvert, Cecil County, Maryland, bought her for a term of years and brought her to his home. In 1725 Elizabeth became the wife of Thomas Job, son of Andrew, and she then wrote to her mother and uncle, giving them the first information of her whereabouts.

Defoe answered her letter, stating that her mother was dead, and that a large property, in addition to her mother's furniture had been left to her by will in case she were ever found. The letter also asked Elizabeth to preserve the chairs which he had used for his private study, " as they had descended to the family from their Flemish ancestors who sought refuge under the banner of Queen Elizabeth from the tyranny of Phillip." He apologized for the condition of the chairs, the wicker seats of which had worn out and had been replaced by wooden ones. This and other letters subsequently received were preserved by Elizabeth Maxwell until her death in 1782. So the story goes.

The first written account of the niece, Elizabeth Maxwell, appears in a letter written by James Trimble in 1874 when he presented a chair, supposed to have been Daniel Defoe's, to the Delaware Historical Society.¹³ The subsequent reiteration of this story after Trimble's letter could be used as an illustration of

¹² Andrew Job had established an inn on Lot # 35 of The Nottingham Lots, which was obtained from William Penn. The site is marked by a State Roads Commission marker at Blue Ball, Maryland.

¹³ James Trimble. Letter to The Delaware Historical Society on the presentation of the chairs to that society in 1874. The chair and letter are now in Delaware Historical Society Collection.

the development of a local legend. In 1876, the first published account of the story appeared in *Scribner's Monthly Magazine*; the article, written by Mary E. Ireland, was called "The Daniel Defoe Family in Maryland."¹⁴ This article was copied rather extensively from Trimble's letter and, speaking kindly, cannot be said to be original. On the death of James Trimble, feature articles about the chairs appeared in local newspapers.¹⁵ This is again a copy of the Ireland account from *Scribner's Magazine*. The Mary E. Ireland story was incorporated in George Johnston's *History of Cecil County* (Elkton, Md., 1881). The story next appeared in the genealogical works of the Job family in 1887.¹⁶ A newspaper account appeared in the *Baltimore Sun* in 1897 on the occasion of the destruction of Juan Fernandez Island, famous as the home of Alexander Selkirk, who first suggested *Robinson Crusoe* to Defoe.¹⁷ It is from this source that one of the biographers of Defoe, Wright, in the *Life of Daniel Defoe*, based much of his story about Elizabeth.¹⁸

In 1899 the story appeared again in *Maryland, The History of a Palatinate*.¹⁹ Then in 1902 Mary E. Ireland published two new accounts of the story in *The Watchword*²⁰ and in a county newspaper.²¹ The new Ireland story differed from all the other Ireland stories only in a paragraph to cover the change in the possession of the chairs from 1876 to 1902. In 1923, a triumphant article appeared in *Antiques* by an antique dealer who had acquired the chairs.²²

*The Tercentenary History of Maryland*²³ in 1925 came up with a twist on the old story. It referred to the account in the *History of Cecil County* but suggested "Defoe might himself have been deported from the jail in which he was imprisoned as a criminal,

¹⁴ *Scribner's Monthly Magazine*, XII (1876), 61.

¹⁵ *American Republican*, May 2, 1876, West Chester, Pa.

¹⁶ Gilbert Cope, *Genealogy of the Sharpness Family* (Philadelphia, 1887).

¹⁷ *Baltimore Sun*, "Daniel Defoe's Niece," Jan. 2, 1897.

¹⁸ Thomas Wright, *The Life of Daniel Defoe* (London, 1931), pp. 15, 26, 190, 237, 348.

¹⁹ W. H. Browne, *Maryland, The History of the Palatinate* (Boston, 1839), pp. 180-181.

²⁰ *The Watchword*, Dec. 4, 1902.

²¹ *Elkton Appeal*, Dec. 17, 1902 (Holiday Number).

²² T. Van C. Phillips, "Pedigreed Antiques X, Two Chairs of Daniel Defoe," *Antiques*, III (1923), 20-21.

²³ M. P. Andrews, *Tercentenary History of Maryland* (Chicago, 1925), I, 401.

in which the author of *Robinson Crusoe* would have joined his niece in Maryland, the former as convict, the latter as a redemptioner." The story appeared the same year in *The Philadelphia Public Ledger*.²⁴ *The Descendants of Andrew Job* ²⁵ (1928) again repeated the 1887 Gilbert Cope and Ireland stories. Wright, the biographer of Defoe, who has made the most of the Maxwell story, acknowledges his sources as the *Baltimore Sun* story (1897) and a member of the Job family, who probably forwarded to Wright the 1928 McGuire account.

In 1933 the story appeared again in the *General Magazine* ²⁶ and in 1934, in MacElree's *Around the Boundaries of Chester County*.²⁷ The latest references are those found in the *Maryland Guide*,²⁸ Miller's *Cecil County, Maryland*,²⁹ and the *Bulletin of the Cecil County Historical Society*.³⁰

Unfortunately, the story is not substantiated by known facts. Defoe had at least two sisters whose births are recorded, Mary and Elizabeth. Mary married Francis Bartham and Elizabeth married Robert Davis. If there was a third sister who married a Maxwell, it does not appear in any available record.

The records of the passengers brought over to Philadelphia and records of Quakers who attended meetings at the Bull and Mouth in London show no trace of any Mrs. Maxwell or a daughter, Elizabeth Maxwell.

It is known that on January 30, 1703, a warrant for Defoe's arrest was issued and Defoe went into hiding. He was discovered on May 20 in the house of a French weaver.³¹

As to the chair, if it were a genuine sixteenth century chair, it would have been one of the last things a religious refugee from Flanders would have found room for in his belongings. If Defoe had left an antique chair, or two such chairs, he could hardly have

²⁴ Dec. 6, 1925, p. 10.

²⁵ F. J. McGuire, *Descendants of Andrew Job* (1928). Typewritten copies are in the Chester County Historical Society and the Maryland Historical Society.

²⁶ Edward E. Wildman, "Survival of Penn's Original Forest," *The General Magazine and Historical Chronicle*, XXXV (1933), 323-327.

²⁷ Wilmer W. MacElree, *Around the Boundaries of Chester County* (West Chester, 1934), pp. 178-179.

²⁸ *Maryland, A Guide to the Old Line State* (New York, 1940), p. 300.

²⁹ A. E. Miller, *Cecil County, Maryland, A Study in Local History* (Elkton, 1949), pp. 150-153.

³⁰ *Bulletin of The Historical Society of Cecil County*, No. 3 (1956).

³¹ Sutherland, *op. cit.*, pp. 89, 91.

sent it, or them, to anyone in Maryland, for a Mrs. Brooks was suing to have all his property in London seized to satisfy what she claimed was an outstanding debt.

Of course, the importance of this story is the possibility that Defoe used the experiences of his niece, Elizabeth Maxwell, as the basis for Moll Flanders' experiences in Maryland. The description of Moll "on the Maryland side of the bay," her meeting of Quakers, her mother's will in *Moll Flanders*, has a tantalizing correlation to the Elizabeth Maxwell story in which Defoe's niece came to Maryland in 1718, settled on the Maryland side of the bay in Cecil County, served as a redemptionist under a benevolent Quaker, Andrew Job, and was left property by her dead mother's will. Then in *Colonel Jack*, Jack "sailed north to the bottom of the bay, as they called it, and into a river called Susquehanna, and then quitting the boat, they wandered through the woods till they came to Pennsylvania." This area is now Cecil County, where Elizabeth Maxwell is supposed to have settled.

Since there is no substantiation for the story, and even according to the story, Defoe was out of contact with his supposed niece in 1722 when he wrote *Moll Flanders*, we must look elsewhere for the source of Defoe's knowledge of Maryland. The one positive source of information about early Maryland for Defoe was his tobacco factor in Maryland, Samuel Sandford. In the 1680-1690's Defoe was active in shipping and business affairs.

On June 27, 1690, Defoe commenced a suit in chancery against Humphrey Ayles, who was master and part owner of a ship, *The Batcheler of London*. The bill of complaint, dated June 18, 1688, stated that Ayles had agreed to sail for America with the first good wind after June 20, carrying with him all such goods, passengers, and merchandise as Defoe should put on board. He was to sail to Boston, discharge part of his cargo to Defoe's factors there and proceed within eight days to New York, where he was to discharge more goods and take on board such goods and merchandise as Defoe's factors there might provide. The ship was to leave again for Maryland where more cargo was to be discharged and Ayles was to take "soe many hogsheads of tobacco and other goods and merchandizes." He was to spend "fifty running days in the whole (if she shall not be sooner dispatched)," and then sail for the Isle of Wight or the Downs, and there wait

twenty-four hours to receive Defoe's directions as to whether the ship should proceed to London or to Holland. The ships' company was to do the loading in Maryland, "soe always that the said tobacco's should not lye above the distance of one halfe mile from the river," and Ayles was to be paid for the loading. Defoe had the right to keep his ship six days on demurrage at New York or Maryland (over and above the fifty days already mentioned), and on demurrage he was to allow Ayles forty-five shillings a day.

Defoe's grievance was that Ayles stayed in New England twenty-six days,

about his owne proper affairs and concerns over and beyond the type allotted . . . to the very great injury and damage to your Orator for the said Ayles knew very well that his ffreighting in Virginia depended much upon his being a forward shipp which he might have been had he not stayed in New England and loytred away the opportunity in soe much that your Orator's Agents in Virginia dispaired of his comeing and were Engaged for many of their goods before he came there.

Defoe further complained that when Ayles did arrive in Virginia he took no steps to get a cargo of tobacco on board his ship, although Defoe's agents often requested him to fetch boats and shallops to carry it away. And yet Ayles since his return home had charged Defoe £144 for demurrage in Virginia, though he himself was responsible for the delay. Not only that, but Ayles received many separate sums of money to the value of £500 or more from Defoe's agents, both abroad and at home; he also had disposed of quantities of his goods and taken on several passengers without accounting to Defoe for the money received in those ways. He had also let many of the passengers and their servants go on shore without demanding their passage money. Defoe asked that Ayles should be compelled to submit such an account.

Ayles' story was that any delay was due to contrary winds. On December 3, he delivered to Defoe's factor in Maryland the servants he had on board for him, but although he was ready with boats and shallops to fetch and lade the tobacco, there was not one hogshead provided by any factor or agent, nor was he given notice of any tobacco lying within half a mile of the river, except seven hogsheads, "which were all fetched on board with

all convenient speed." After staying at least sixty-four days on demurrage in the hope that the tobacco might turn up, he finally took in goods on account of other merchants at the best rate he could get, rather than return without any freight at all.

In a further answer dated November, 1691, Ayles asserted that he gave an account of his passage money to Defoe's correspondents at Boston, John Sharp and Joseph Beaton, co-partners. At Maryland he applied to Mr. Samuel Sandford, Defoe's only correspondent there, and Sandford having only seven hogsheads of tobacco ready had prevailed upon him to stay sixty-four days while he tried to get a lading. Ayles himself had taken great pains in the matter, and had "rid and travailed severall hundred miles thereabouts," though without success.³²

It is interesting to note how Defoe used his knowledge of early Maryland in his novels. It must be admitted that, although in *Moll Flanders* and *Colonel Jack* there is much about plantation life in Maryland and Virginia, he was more intent on telling the story than in painting a background. But Defoe pictured the life of an indentured servant in early Maryland from the unique point of view of the woman character, Moll Flanders.

In the story Moll is in Virginia and wants to go to Carolina.

We began to make inquiries for vessels going to Carolina, and in a little while, got information that on the other side of the bay, as they call it, namely in Maryland, there was a ship which came from Carolina, laden with rice and other goods, and was going back again—Thither from there to Jamaica, with provisions. He hired a sloop to take our goods and taking, as it were, a fine farewell to the Potomac River. He went with all our cargo over to Maryland. This was a long and unpleasant voyage, because the weather was but indifferent, the water rough, and the vessel small and inconvenient. We were full a hundred miles up the Potomac River, in a part which they call Westmoreland County, and as that river is the greatest in Virginia, and I have heard say it is the greatest river in the world that falls into another river, and not directly into the sea, so we had base weather in it and were frequently so broad, that when we were in the middle, we could not see land on either side for many leagues together. Then we had the great river or bay of Chesapeake to cross, which is where the river Potomac falls, into it, near thirty miles broad, and we entered more great vast waters whose names I know not, so that our voyage was full two

³² James K. Sutherland, "Some Early Troubles of Daniel Defoe," *Review of English Studies*, IX (1933), 275-290. (These accounts are from Public Record Office, London, C5 84/9, C7 122/9, C7 122/36.)

hundred miles in a poor sorry sloop. We came to the place in five days' sailing. I think they call it Phillip Point.³³

Defoe also mentions the Rappahannock River. After reaching Maryland, Moll misses the boat for Carolina and decides to stay in Maryland because the country was "fertile and good." This part is of interest since it discusses the plantation life.

Here we bought two servants, viz., an English woman servant just come on shore from a ship of Liverpoole, and a negro man servant, things absolutely necessary for all people that pretend to settle in that country. This honest Quaker was very helpful. We took up a large piece of land from the Government of the country, in order to form our plantation. Having been well received here, and accomodated with a convenient lodging, till we could prepare things and have enough land cleared and timber and materials provided for building us a house, all which we managed by the direction of the Quaker, so that in one years time, we had near fifty acres of land cleared, part of it enclosed, and some of it planted with tobacco, though not much, and besides, we had a garden ground and corn sufficient to help supply our servants with roots and herbs and bread.³⁴

Defoe's use of Maryland and Virginia as a setting for the adventure of Moll Flanders probably did not go unnoticed in the colonies. Morton, in his edition of *The Present State of Virginia* (1724), suggests that in a reference to "undeserved calumny" of Virginia, Hugh Jones could have had in mind Daniel Defoe's *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders, who . . . was Twelve years a Whore, Five Times a Wife (whereof once to her own Brother), Twelve years a Thief, Eight years a Transported Felon in Virginia. . . .*

³³ *Moll Flanders* (Modern Library Edition), p. 315.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 316-317.

³⁵ Richard L. Morton, *The Present State of Virginia* by Hugh Jones (Durham, N. C., 1956), p. 159.

JOHN SURRATT AND THE LINCOLN ASSASSINATION PLOT

By ALFRED ISACSSON ¹

JOHN HARRISON SURRATT, JR., was born on April 13, 1844, in what was then known as Surrattsville, Maryland.² His mother, the former Mary Eugenia Jenkins, born to a wealthy family, was educated by Mrs. Winifred Martin at her Alexandria, Virginia, school. She had married John Harrison Surratt, Sr., around 1835³ and lived for a time in Washington on an estate that her husband had inherited.⁴ In 1840, he bought a farm in Southern Maryland and opened a tavern and general store. When a post office was opened at "Surratt's" in 1854, he obtained the

¹ In the preparation of this study, I owe a debt of gratitude to Monsignor Edward P. McAdams of Washington, who kindly shared his knowledge with me on Surratt. He had met John Surratt, was very well acquainted with his sister, Anna, and her husband, Doctor William Tonry. Their son, Reginald Tonry, was a lifelong friend of Msgr. McAdams. Annie Ward, who attended Mrs. Surratt on the scaffold, and others who were connected with the assassination of President Lincoln were also among the Monsignor's friends. Mrs. Helen Jones Campbell of Yorktown, Virginia, author of a book on Mrs. Surratt, also was generous in helping me by lending letters and other materials and by answering numerous questions. A collection of materials on Surratt and the Lincoln assassination, perhaps the largest in the world, was made available to me by the owner, Margaret Kahler Bearden of Rochester, New York, who in addition, provided me with much information. I would also like to thank my confrères, Malachy Mahoney, O. Carm., and Brian Murphy, O. Carm., Professor Peter G. Marron, under whose direction this study was originally written as a master's thesis at St. Bonaventure University, and the staffs of the National Archives, the Library of Congress, the Rare Books Division and the Law Office Library. There is a bibliography of sources in my master's thesis and one has also been left at the Maryland Historical Society.

² Helen J. Campbell, *The Case for Mrs. Surratt* (New York, 1943), p. 37. The *Baltimore Sun*, Apr. 22, 1916, p. 16, erroneously cites Washington, D. C., as the place of his birth. Surrattsville is known today as Clinton.

³ Guy W. Moore, *The Case of Mrs. Surratt* (Norman, 1956), p. 4.

⁴ Supposedly a cruelly treated slave burned down the main house of the estate. See Lloyd Lewis, *Myths After Lincoln* (New York, 1941), p. 162. The house did catch fire but it was quickly extinguished and John Surratt, Sr., had the building repaired (Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 36). Stanley Kimmel, *The Mad Booths of Maryland* (Indianapolis, 1940), p. 195, has mutinous slaves burning down a home which Mrs. Surratt inherited shortly after her marriage. Msgr. McAdams, in conversation with this author, November 10, 1956, stated that Mrs. Surratt inherited nothing in the way of land.

appointment as postmaster.⁵ In this business venture he was not too successful. An alcoholic, this represents his last attempt at recovery from a steady decline resulting from his addiction.⁶ Two other children, Isaac Douglas and Anna, were born to John and Mary Surratt.

In the fall of 1859,⁷ John Surratt, Jr., then fifteen, went to Saint Charles College which is staffed by the Sulpicians and was located in those days at Ellicott City, Maryland. Founded in 1848 by the Reverend Oliver L. Jenkins, S. S., the college had a six-year course of studies and was intended exclusively as preparatory to Saint Mary's Seminary in Baltimore. Thus John Surratt went there, it is assumed, with the intention of studying for the priesthood.

In July, 1862, Surratt left Saint Charles College, apparently deciding not to be a priest. Since John's father died the same year and Isaac, the older Surratt boy, had in 1861 joined the Pony Express riding between Matamoras, Texas, and Santa Fe, New Mexico,⁸ it is possible that John left the seminary to help his mother and sister at home. Returning to Surrattsville, John filled out his father's term as postmaster and assisted in the work of running the tavern and general store.⁹

Shortly after he left Saint Charles College—probably the late summer or fall of 1862—John Surratt enlisted in the Confederate army and was assigned to the Secret Service division, mainly as a dispatch rider.¹⁰ Although this may not have been a glamorous assignment when compared to spying, John Surratt did perform valuable work for the Confederate cause by riding dispatches from Washington, through Union lines, to Confederate boats on the Potomac or to Richmond, Virginia.¹¹

⁵ Letter of W. W. Howes, First Assistant-Postmaster General, to Helen J. Campbell, Wash., D.C., Aug. 21, 1939.

⁶ Msgr. McAdams.

⁷ This is the date given by Louis Weichmann at the Conspiracy trial and at Surratt's own trial. Benn Pitman, *The Assassination of President Lincoln and the Trial of the Conspirators: the Courtroom Testimony as Originally Compiled by Benn Pitman*, Facsimile edition (New York, 1954), p. 113; *Trial of John H. Surratt in the Criminal Court for the District of Columbia* [Hereafter cited as *Surratt Trial*] (Washington, 1867), I, 369. A letter from the president of the college, J. C. Dukehart, Rev. S. S., July 30, 1956, states that any college records referring to John Surratt were destroyed during the fire of 1911. After this fire, the college was moved to Catonsville.

⁸ Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

⁹ Howes to Campbell, letter of Aug. 21, 1939.

¹⁰ The *Baltimore Sun*, Apr. 22, 1916; *New York Times*, Apr. 22, 1916.

¹¹ Sworn Statement of H. Sainte-Marie to Rufus King, Rome, July 10, 1866, in

Louis Weichmann was associated with Surratt in this work of carrying dispatches. Weichmann had been a fellow student and close friend of Surratt at Saint Charles. Both had left the school at the same time, and in the latter part of 1862, Weichmann obtained a teaching position at Saint Matthew's Institute in Washington.¹² He remained there a little over a year, and then he secured a position as a clerk in the War Department. In March, 1863, Weichmann visited John Surratt in Surrattsville where he met John's mother and sister, Anna. During 1863 and 1864 Surratt frequently visited Weichmann in Washington.¹³

Weichmann pilfered copies of dispatches from the War Department and turned them over to Surratt¹⁴ who in turn conveyed them to the South along with any other information he had come across or which had been delivered to him from other sources.

In 1864, probably the early spring, John Surratt and Louis Weichmann met Henri Beaumont de Sainte-Marie who later on played an important role in John's life. Weichmann and Surratt traveled to Texas, Maryland, thirteen miles north of Baltimore, to visit the pastor of the parish there whom they knew fairly well. The pastor had gone away and Sainte-Marie, an Italian priest in good standing, was supplying for him. Sainte-Marie later claimed that about a month after this meeting Weichmann obtained for him a position teaching at Saint Matthew's Institute in Washington. That Surratt, on one of his supposed visits to Sainte-Marie, offered to send him south is another of Sainte-Marie's assertions, but this and meetings with Sainte-Marie by Surratt subsequent to the first one at Texas are doubtful.¹⁵ It is also unlikely that Sainte-Marie played any part in Surratt's secret service activities.

During October, 1864, the Surratts moved to a three-story

Leo F. Stock, ed., *United States Ministers to the Papal States: Instructions and Dispatches, 1848-1868* (Washington, 1933), p. 371. Surratt's version is given in his Rockville, Maryland, lecture, *Washington Evening Star*, Dec. 7, 1870. Confederate Treasury Department records substantiate the fact that Surratt was a courier.

¹² Stock, *op. cit.*, p. 371.

¹³ *Surratt Trial*, I, 369.

¹⁴ Moore, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-93.

¹⁵ In Stock, *op. cit.*, pp. 362, 368, 371, is given Sainte-Marie's version of the meeting and his claims as stated above. Msgr. McAdams maintains that this was the sole meeting of Surratt and Sainte-Marie. He also informed the author that Sainte-Marie was an Italian priest who later apostatized. Eventually he enlisted in the Union army as a substitute for E. D. Porter, principal of an academy in Newark, Delaware. Captured by Confederate troops, he gained his freedom by revealing the plot of some Union foragers. He states that he was sent to Nassau and came, via England, to Canada which he gives as his home. Stock, *op. cit.*, p. 368.

house at 541 H Street, Northwest, in Washington. Besides the fact that the tavern and store lay within the Union lines and consequently suffered financial losses from the depredations of the soldiers, it is quite possible that John's courier work prompted him to persuade his mother to move.¹⁶ She rented the tavern, store and what was left of the farm to John M. Lloyd. Until Lloyd took over in December, John Surratt remained at Surrattsville to care for the property.¹⁷

Coming to Washington in December, John obtained a position at the Adams Express Company for fifty dollars a month but he worked with the company only for about ten days. They were so busy moving the baggage of Union soldiers that he couldn't get leave to "go into the country on business"—more than likely his blockade running of the Union lines—so he took French leave to continue his work in behalf of the Southern cause.¹⁸

Once established in the house on H Street, Mrs. Surratt began to take in boarders. Appolonia Dean, an eleven-year-old orphan, and Honora Fitzpatrick, the nineteen-year-old daughter of a Washington bank collector, were her first steady boarders. Louis Weichmann, at the request of John Surratt, came to live at the boarding house before the end of 1864.¹⁹ He was given the back room on the third floor, and when John was home he shared this room with him. Although its furnishings were plain, consisting of one bed, a table, looking glass and three trunks, Weichmann seems to have been satisfied.²⁰

In February of 1865, John Holahan with his wife and daughter came to take up residence at the boarding house and occupied the two front rooms on the third floor. Anna Surratt had her room in the attic which she shared with her cousin, Olivia Jenkins, when the latter was in town. Mrs. Surratt and Miss Fitzpatrick shared the room behind the parlor on the second floor. On the ground floor were the kitchen and the dining room. Susan Jackson, a negress who did the laundry, was Mrs. Surratt's only servant.²¹

¹⁶ Dion Haco's fictionalized work, *The Private Journal and Diary of John H. Surratt, the Conspirator* (New York, 1866), tells too vividly of these dangerous courier trips to Richmond and supposed attempts to get contracts with northern merchants for the Confederacy (pp. 47-58).

¹⁷ Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹⁸ *Surratt Trial*, I, 372. Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 161, mentions the salary.

¹⁹ Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

²⁰ *Surratt Trial*, I, p. 376.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 370.

The Surratts attended Saint Aloysius Church where Father Wiget, S. J., an old friend of the family and Mrs. Surratt's confessor, was stationed.²²

It was during the latter part of December, 1864, that John Surratt met John Wilkes Booth for the first time. Booth knew of Surratt and was anxious to meet him because his knowledge of the terrain of Southern Maryland fitted very well into Booth's plans. But it was Weichmann, who brought them together.²³

John Surratt, suspicious of Booth at first, was naturally very reticent about his own activities in the Confederate Secret Service. Thus Booth was forced to unfold his own plan to kidnap Lincoln and thereby end the war in order to persuade Surratt to join him. Once John saw what was involved and what the outcome could be, he agreed to take part in the plot which at that time was still indefinite.²⁴

After this first meeting, Booth and Surratt frequently hired horses from William Cleaver's stable on Sixth Street "to go down into the country on parties."²⁵ More than likely these trips were actually some sort of reconnaissance of the route to be used in the intended kidnapping.

Sometime in January, 1865, Surratt visited Richard M. Smoot, a small planter in Charles County, Maryland, and bought three boats from him for \$125. Each was large enough to carry about fifteen people and Surratt had them hidden along the bank of Kings Creek.²⁶

It was also at this time, January 15, 1865, that Doctor Samuel Mudd, Surratt and Booth had a rather mysterious meeting. Louis Weichmann who was present for part of it spoke of this meeting at the Conspiracy Trial and again at John Surratt's trial. His

²² Monsignor McAdams maintains that Father Walters was not the regular confessor of Mrs. Surratt, which Father Walters claimed. He would rather confine the ministrations of Father Walters to Mrs. Surratt to the period immediately preceding her execution.

²³ *Ibid.* Monsignor realizes that this is contrary to popular belief, e. g. Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 10, but assigning such an active part to Weichmann helps to explain many of his subsequent actions and much of his otherwise obscure testimony at the Conspiracy Trial and John Surratt's own trial.

²⁴ Washington *Evening Star*, Dec. 7, 1870. A very good description of this first meeting of Booth and Surratt may be found in Francis Wilson, *John Wilkes Booth, Fact and Fiction of Lincoln's Assassination* (Boston, 1929), pp. 63-67.

²⁵ Pitman, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

²⁶ This is taken from a pamphlet written by Smoot in 1908 and mentioned in Izola Forrester, *This One Mad Act: The Unknown Story of John Wilkes Booth and His Family* (Boston, 1937), pp. 260-261.

versions vary slightly as to details. Weichmann and Surratt met Booth and Mudd when they were out on a walk in Washington. Since Weichmann and Doctor Mudd were the only ones who did not know each other, Surratt handled the introductions. Subsequently they went to the National Hotel where Booth ordered wine and cigars. At some point in the conversation, all except Weichmann left for another room to discuss, so they later told Weichmann, Booth's purchase of Doctor Mudd's farm.²⁷ Instead, the meeting seems to have been something in the nature of a consultation about the roads out of Washington and into Southern Maryland.²⁸

After this meeting at the National Hotel, Booth came a few times to visit John Surratt at the boarding house where they went upstairs to talk in private. When taken together, these January activities force one to conclude that the kidnapping of Lincoln was to take place soon. January 18 is the date given by Jim Bishop for this attempt, which he claims was to take place in Ford's theater. Surratt's part was to shut off the master gas valve under the stage and thus throw the whole theater into darkness. Lincoln's failure to attend the theater that night upset their plans.²⁹

At the beginning of March, 1865, the little group of conspirators began to plan their next kidnapping attempt. Surratt and George Atzerodt, one of his own recruits for the band,³⁰ and David Herold rode down to Mrs. Surratt's tavern and general store at Surrattsville, Maryland. They brought two carbines, ammunition, rope and a monkey wrench which they had the tenant, John Lloyd, conceal at their direction for use in the new plot.³¹ There were more meetings of the conspirators. Lewis Payne, another of the group of conspirators, disguised as a minister and going under the alias of Lewis Wood, came frequently to see John Surratt at the boarding house. One day Louis Weichmann came upon them talking in the room he shared with Surratt. Sitting upon the bed

²⁷ Pitman, *op. cit.*, p. 85, and *Surratt Trial*, I, 371.

²⁸ *Ibid.*; this would then explain the map-like drawings on the back of an envelope mentioned by Weichmann.

²⁹ Jim Bishop. *The Day Lincoln Was Shot* (New York, 1955), p. 76. He states that records of this attempt are scarce. I have found none in primary sources I have consulted although they do indicate that something was planned for this time. Bishop's may very well be the explanation of the January activity.

³⁰ Kimmel, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

³¹ Pitman, *op. cit.*, p. 85, and *Surratt Trial*, I, 277. The testimony of Lloyd varies on these occasions but this affects nothing as far as concerns us here.

surrounded by spurs and pistols, they played with bowie knives as they spoke.⁸²

On March 17, Surratt and Payne went to Ford's Theater to see *Jane Shore*. They had tickets to a private box and took the Misses Honora Fitzpatrick and Appolonia Dean from the boarding house as their escorts. After they had taken the ladies home from the theater, Surratt and Payne met Booth and the rest of the conspirators at Gautier's Restaurant, where they ate in a private dining room and undoubtedly planned their next attempt.⁸³ They knew that President Lincoln was soon to attend a play at Soldier's Home. It was there that they hoped to kidnap him.

The next night Booth was playing Pescara in the *Apostate* and he had given John Surratt some free tickets. So John went to the theater again, this time with Louis Weichmann and on the way to Ford's they met George Atzerodt who joined them. While at the theater they saw David Herold, another one of the conspirators.⁸⁴ It was on the very next day, March 19th, that Surratt took Weichmann along with him to the Herndon House where he secured a room for Payne. Rather than use Payne's name, Surratt reserved the room under the general term, "a delicate gentleman." ⁸⁵

The morning of March 20 found all the preparations made. The President was to go that afternoon to see *Still Waters Run Deep* at the Soldiers' Home. The conspirators gathered along the road and waited for his carriage. One did come along but it was not Lincoln's. For some reason he had decided not to attend the play. Because they naturally did not know of this change of plans on the part of the President, the conspirators feared that their plot had been discovered in some way and so the group broke up, each one seeking a safe place to hide.⁸⁶

John Surratt went to his mother's boarding house after the March 20th attempt and left as soon as possible for Richmond accompanied by Mrs. Slater, another dispatch rider.⁸⁷ While he was in Richmond, Judah Benjamin, Secretary of State for the Confederacy, gave him dispatches to carry to Canada as well as

⁸² Pitman, *op. cit.*, p. 115, and *Surratt Trial*, I, 377.

⁸³ *Surratt Trial*, I, 380. Also, Bishop, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-84.

⁸⁴ *Surratt Trial*, I, 380.

⁸⁵ Pitman, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

⁸⁶ An excellent but brief description of this attempt may be found in Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-71.

⁸⁷ Pitman, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

\$200 in gold to use on the way.³⁸ Returning north, he had trouble eluding detectives, but he succeeded and arrived in Washington on April 3—the day that the news of the fall of Richmond was received.³⁹

When he arrived at the boarding house, Surratt went to John Holahan's room and exchanged with him two of his twenty dollar gold pieces for sixty dollars in paper money.⁴⁰ John also found time to go out and have some oysters with Weichmann. The following day Surratt left for New York by train.⁴¹

On April 6, he arrived safely in Montreal and registered at Saint Lawrence Hall under the name of John Harrison.⁴² Surratt delivered the dispatches to General Edward G. Lee, Judah Benjamin's military attaché in Montreal. Lee sent John on a mission to Elmira, New York, to obtain sketches of the prison there and gather any other information which might be needed to plan a wholesale break of the Confederate soldiers imprisoned there. Surratt then left Montreal on April 12 to begin this new mission.⁴³

While he was still in Canada, John Surratt wrote to his mother describing Montreal and the French Cathedral for her. Complaining of the high prices at Saint Lawrence Hall, John told her he was considering moving into a private boarding house. It was on the morning of April 14 that Mrs. Surratt received this letter.⁴⁴

John Surratt arrived in Elmira on April 13. In the light of later events, it is quite fortunate for him that he decided to buy a suit and some other clothes. He went to Charles B. Stewart's tailor shop to buy the suit, but Stewart did not have exactly what he wanted.⁴⁵ On both April 13 and 14 John went to another clothing store, Stewart and Uffords, and did make some purchases on both these occasions. A clerk named Joseph Carroll

³⁸ *Evening Star*, Dec. 7, 1870.

³⁹ Pitman, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

⁴⁰ *Surratt Trial*, I, 670.

⁴¹ Weichmann said that Surratt left on the evening of April 3 for Montreal (Pitman, *op. cit.*, p. 114). Surratt said in his Rockville, Maryland, lecture that he left on the 4th of April (*Evening Star*, Dec. 7, 1870).

⁴² *Surratt Trial*, I, 514, where the hotel register is given in evidence and David H. Bates testifies that this is Surratt's signature. Also p. 748, where Miss Honora Fitzpatrick swears that this is his writing.

⁴³ *Evening Star*, Dec. 7, 1870. "Defendant's Affidavit of Proof," U. S. vs. John H. Surratt, No. 4731, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁴⁴ Pitman, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

⁴⁵ Stewart could not remember whether it was April 13 or 14 that Surratt came into his store, *Surratt Trial*, I, 723-724.

waited on him and carefully marked both purchases in the cash book.⁴⁶

Early in the morning of April 15—the day after the assassination of President Lincoln—John Surratt, still in Elmira, went into John Cass' clothing store. He tried to buy some white shirts but Cass did not have the style he wanted. During the course of his conversation with Surratt, Cass mentioned the assassination of Lincoln and apparently this is the first news Surratt had of the fact.⁴⁷

That same Saturday John took the train to Canandaigua, New York, and in the evening he registered for a room at the Webster House again using the alias of John Harrison.⁴⁸

The questions arise, could Surratt possibly have been an accomplice in the assassination in the light of the above evidence, and did he even know of the planned assassination?

There were certain people who claimed they had seen John Surratt in Washington on the day of the assassination, April 14, 1865. Theodore Benjamin Rhodes, a clock repairer, said that he observed Surratt in Ford's on April 14 fixing the door to the President's box. When discovered by Rhodes, John supposedly said he was going to decorate the box for that evening.⁴⁹ However, John T. Ford, the owner of the theater, when testifying for the defense at Surratt's trial showed quite clearly that Rhodes' story was impossible because its details did not fit in with the construction of the theater.⁵⁰

Charles Wood said that he saw Surratt in a Washington barber-shop on the morning of the 14th.⁵¹ Joseph M. Dye and Frank M. Heaton both claimed that they noticed him at Ford's the night of the assassination.⁵² It was on the following morning that Charles Ramsell thought he spotted John Surratt going past Fort Bunker Hill in Washington.⁵³ The testimony of all these witnesses to Surratt's presence in Washington was very noticeably lacking in

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 733.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 725. Cass himself learned of the assassination from *The Elmira Advertiser* of April 15 which he read that morning between 7:00 and 7:30 A.M., *Ibid.*, I, 726.

⁴⁸ *Surratt Trial*, I, 761. Failing produced the register of the hotel at Surratt's trial and identified him as John Harrison.

⁴⁹ *Surratt Trial*, I, 501.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 545, 546.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, I, 495.

⁵² *Ibid.*, I, 135, 500.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, I, 499.

details; nor was there any written evidence such as the cash book of Stewart and Uffords clothing store. None of the witnesses appeared to have ever seen or met John Surratt before they supposedly saw him in Washington on these occasions.

The part that Surratt is supposed to have played in Lincoln's assassination varied among those who stood for his complicity—stated as a fact in the Charge and Specification at the Conspiracy Trial.⁵⁴ One has him cutting wires during the escape of the killers to keep them ahead of the news of the assassination.⁵⁵ Another has him assigned to kill General U. S. Grant but losing his nerve when the time came.⁵⁶ Sainte-Marie would make him the brains behind it all, acting on orders from Richmond. After he had planned everything, he left for New York where he was on the night of the assassination, and at one time Sainte-Marie even had the Catholic clergy behind the scenes of the assassination.⁵⁷

Was it physically possible for Surratt to have done any of these things?

We have seen that both the testimony of Joseph Carroll and the cash book of Stewart and Uffords clothing store unquestionably placed John Surratt in Elmira on April 14. Also it has been mentioned how he came to John Cass' store to buy some white shirts early in the morning of April 15, the day after the assassination. Could John Surratt have made it to Washington, participated in the assassination and then returned to Elmira in the interval between these two events? It took twelve hours for the train to travel from Elmira to New York City.⁵⁸ Leaving Elmira very early on the morning of the 14th, John Surratt could have possibly reached Washington in time for the assassination that night shortly after 10:00 P.M. But he never could have stopped in at Stewart and Uffords on the morning of the 14th because he would have had to leave Elmira before 6:00 A.M. at the very latest.

The General Superintendent of the North Central Railroad, J. N. Dubarry, showed at Surratt's trial that a train leaving Washington on the night of the 14th, after the assassination, could not

⁵⁴ Pitman, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

⁵⁵ Kimmel, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

⁵⁶ John A. Gay, "The Fate of the Lincoln Conspirators: the Account of the Hanging, Given by Lieutenant-Colonel Christian Rath, the Executioner," *McClure's Magazine*, XXXVII (1911), 632-633.

⁵⁷ Stock, *op. cit.*, pp. 368, 371, 382.

⁵⁸ *Surratt Trial*, I, 724.

have arrived in Elmira in time enough to permit Surratt to be back at Cass' clothing store before the end of the morning of the 15th of April.⁵⁹ Under cross-examination, Dubarry was forced to modify his statement somewhat to the effect that there was a very slight possibility that John Surratt could have made it back to Elmira before the morning of April 15.⁶⁰ It seems to me that this slight possibility is eliminated by the fact that after the assassination General Tyler stopped at the Relay House all the trains coming out of Washington, searched them and held them for a while⁶¹—a fact not brought out at John Surratt's trial.

This evidence, in conjunction with the testimony to his presence in Elmira, makes it necessary to conclude that it was physically impossible for John Surratt to have participated in the assassination. Moreover, all this had presupposed another fact: his knowledge of the assassination.

It is generally agreed that John Wilkes Booth decided to assassinate Lincoln sometime between the preceding Monday and Wednesday (April 10-12). For a long time he and the other conspirators tried to kidnap Lincoln but only after the surrender at Appomattox did he decide on such a desperate measure to save the Confederacy. At the time that he made this decision, John Surratt was either in Montreal or on his way to Elmira. Surratt later admitted that he had consented to participate in kidnapping but denied that killing had ever been part of the plan.⁶² But did he know of and consent to this new plan?

One version of the assassination would have Booth in New York getting in touch with Surratt in Canada and asking him to come to Washington. When John got as far south as Elmira, he supposedly telegraphed Booth, then found out that Booth had gone to Washington and went there himself.⁶³ There is no evidence to support this beyond the statement of one man whose reputation for veracity was none too strong.⁶⁴ Surratt later told

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, II, 772.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 775.

⁶¹ Bishop, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-285.

⁶² *Evening Star*, Dec. 7, 1870.

⁶³ Testimony of Dr. L. J. McMillan, U. S. Congress, Committee on the Judiciary, Report No. 33, 39th Congress, 2nd Session, March 2, 1867, p. 13; Philip Van Doren Stern, *The Man Who Killed Lincoln* (New York, 1939), pp. 31-32.

⁶⁴ Father Charles Boucher said under cross-examination at Surratt's trial that Dr. McMillan's reputation for truthfulness around Shefford, Canada, where he practiced was not too good. *Surratt Trial*, II, 898-914, esp. p. 900.

how he did telegraph Booth from Elmira, but he did this after the assassination, and his purpose was to find out where Booth was and if he had had any part in Lincoln's death.⁶⁵

From the testimony supporting his departure from Montreal and his presence in Elmira and considering the negligible evidence for the fact that Booth contacted him, it seems most likely that John Surratt did not even know of John Wilkes Booth's decision to assassinate Lincoln.

After arriving at Canandaigua on Saturday, April 15, John Surratt stayed at the Webster House until Monday. He later described how he saw in Monday's paper that he was wanted for complicity in the assassination and that a reward of \$25,000 was being offered for his capture.⁶⁶ He was hunted because he was mistaken for the assailant of William H. Seward, Lewis Payne.⁶⁷ Either because he realized that return to Washington would result in a speedy trial and conviction or simply because of fear, John Surratt fled to Canada. On April 18, he registered for a room at Saint Lawrence Hall, Montreal.⁶⁸

As soon as John Surratt was listed as wanted, the Washington Police Department sent to Canada Louis Weichmann and John Holahan along with James McDevitt, a policeman, to search for him. The police had learned from Weichmann that John Surratt was in Canada on a mission for the Confederacy. On the night of April 20, the group had gotten as far north as Burlington, Vermont, and slept in the Burlington depot while they waited for the train to Canada. There, Holahan lost his tobacco as well as a handkerchief of Surratt's. This had been given to Holahan by the laundry woman at the boarding house by mistake. Someone found the lost handkerchief and turned it in to the local police who spent some time looking for Surratt in that area after Weichmann, Holahan and McDevitt had left.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ *Evening Star*, Dec. 7, 1870.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *The War of the Rebellion: a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Ser. I, Vol. 46, Part III, pp. 847-848, gives a description of Surratt and the reward notice. *Ibid.*, Ser. I, Vol. 47, Part III, p. 287, W. T. Sherman to Generals Johnston and Hardie, In the Field, Raleigh, North Carolina, states that Surratt attacked Seward and was then in custody.

⁶⁸ Pitman, *op. cit.*, p. 114; *Surratt Trial*, I, 514, 748.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 677, 709. Charles L. Baker, *History of the Secret Service* (Philadelphia, 1867), pp. 555-559, gives letters in support of this theory. Dr. L. J. McMillan created quite a story from the mere finding of this handkerchief. He placed it in Saint Albans, Vermont, by mistake. *Surratt Trial*, I, 472, and U. S. Cong. Report No. 33, p. 13.

By the time they arrived in Montreal, Surratt was either staying or visiting at the house of John Porterfield,⁷⁰ a Confederate agent, where Weichmann just missed catching him. Surratt had to find a safer place to hide than Montreal.

After crossing the Saint Lawrence River by boat, a young lady guided him to Saint Liboire where he arrived around April 22.⁷¹ Joseph F. Du Tully, a woodsman, brought him to the town's Catholic rectory where John stayed for about three months with the pastor, Father Charles Boucher. Surratt and Du Tully frequently went hunting together; sometimes, Father Boucher went along. Excepting excursions of this sort, Surratt kept pretty close to Saint Liboire. By the beginning of May, Father Boucher had deduced John Surratt's real identity but did not turn him in to the United States authorities because he supposedly believed in his innocence.⁷²

In August, Father Boucher brought John Surratt to Montreal where he introduced him to a Father La Pierre. Rather than have John stay at his own house in Montreal, Father La Pierre had him stay at the house of his father, a seller of boots and shoes.⁷³ Remaining there only a short time, John decided to go to Europe.

During the second week of September, both Father La Pierre and Father Boucher accompanied John Surratt to Quebec on the steamer *Montreal*.⁷⁴ While on board Father La Pierre recognized a friend, Dr. Lewis J. A. McMillan, and introduced Surratt to

⁷⁰ *Evening Star*, Dec. 7, 1870. Margaret Bearden states that John Porterfield came to Montreal from Tennessee early in the war and readily harbored any rebels in Canada who were in need of a place to stay.

⁷¹ *Surratt Trial*, I, 473.

⁷² *Ibid.*, II, 895, 905, 907.

⁷³ Dr. L. J. McMillan came up with a rather wild story explaining Surratt's departure for Montreal. Supposedly a maid discovered someone—not knowing it was Surratt—hiding in the rectory. When it was rumored about that the priest had a woman living in his room, Surratt then had to make his presence public for the priest's sake and eventually leave for his own safety. *Ibid.*, I, 473. Concerning Fr. La Pierre, see *Ibid.*, II, 908.

⁷⁴ McMillan denied that Fr. La Pierre went on the *Montreal* to Quebec (*Ibid.*, I, 462). A dispatch from the U. S. Consul Wilding at Liverpool to the State Department indicates that McMillan told Wilding that Fr. La Pierre was on the steamer to Quebec. See H. Wilding to W. H. Seward, Liverpool, Sept. 27, 1865, No. 538, in U. S. Consul, Liverpool, Dispatches to the State Department, vol. XXXIII (Apr. 19, 1865—Apr. 11, 1866), National Archives, Wash., D. C. (Hereafter cited as Liverpool Dispatches). Fr. Boucher deliberately kept out of McMillan's way on the ship because of a previous disagreement with him and consequently did not give McMillan knowledge of his presence on the ship. *Ibid.*, II, 898 f, 910. McMillan at one time gave the date of departure as Sept. 11 (U. S. Cong. Report No. 33, p. 13). At the trial of Surratt he gave Sept. 16 as the date (*Surratt Trial* I, 462).

him as Mr. McCarthy. He asked McMillan to look out for him on the subsequent trip from Quebec to Liverpool. The Doctor agreed. From Montreal John Surratt set sail for Liverpool on the *Peruvian*, the same ship on which McMillan was employed as surgeon.⁷⁵

While on the *Peruvian* John Surratt is supposed to have worn spectacles, a false beard and had his hair dyed dark brown to avoid any possible detection.⁷⁶ He left the ship when it stopped at Londonderry, Ireland, and then crossed over to Liverpool on another ship. There he stayed at the Oratory of the Holy Cross.⁷⁷

Dr. McMillan meanwhile went to see the American consul at Liverpool, H. Wilding, on September 26, the day after he landed. He told Wilding of his being introduced to Surratt under the name of McCarthy on the *Montreal*. He described how aboard the *Peruvian* John eventually told him of his being in the Confederate Secret Service and claimed to be innocent of any complicity in Lincoln's assassination. Surratt was to get in touch with him by note and in this way, McMillan explained, they would know where he was staying should the United States want to attempt extraditing him. After he had received the expected note from Surratt, McMillan visited Wilding two more times; first, with Surratt's address at the Holy Cross Oratory and then to convey to him the information that Surratt hoped to live long enough to give a good account of President Johnson. The latter Wilding forwarded to Washington as a warning.⁷⁸ Eventually instructions of the State Department arrived at Liverpool in reply to Wilding's dispatches containing all this information. The Acting Secretary of State, William Hunter, wrote Wilding that after consulting Secretary of War Stanton and Judge Advocate General Holt, "it is thought advisable that no action be taken in regard to the arrest of the supposed John Surratt at present."⁷⁹

Dr. McMillan carried a note back to Montreal to Father La Pierre from Surratt. John hoped to get some money from Father La Pierre who in turn was to get the money from someone in

⁷⁵ Liverpool Dispatches No. 538. This gives the name "Mr. Lepierre" for Fr. La Pierre. Also see *Surratt Trial*, I, 462.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 463; U. S. Cong. Report No. 33, p. 14.

⁷⁷ Liverpool Dispatches Nos. 538, 539.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, also, No. 544. McMillan tried to pass himself off with Wilding as a passenger on the *Peruvian* but Wilding discovered from another source that he was the surgeon.

⁷⁹ Instructions to Consuls, Vol. XL, No. 476, pp. 552-553, National Archives.

Washington. After delivering this note, McMillan went to John Fox Potter, the American consul in Montreal, to turn in the information, repeating at the same time what he had told Wilding in Liverpool. Potter, unaware of the decision already sent by the State Department to Liverpool, forwarded this information to Washington with the suggestion that someone be sent on the same ship as the money to apprehend John Surratt. But adhering to its previous decision, the State Department did not even acknowledge the reception of the dispatches.⁸⁰

From Liverpool John Surratt went to London.⁸¹ According to Sainte-Marie, he had a letter of introduction given to him in Canada to someone in London. From this person he received some money. This man supposedly wanted to send John to Spain but he preferred to go to Paris, and he went there next with another letter of introduction.⁸²

How long John stayed in Paris is not known, but he soon went to Italy. Detained at Civita Vecchia because of the lack of funds, he wrote to Doctor Neve, the Rector of the English College in Rome, for money and received fifty francs from him. Once John arrived in Rome, he went to see Doctor Neve and was able to stay for some time at the English College. Eventually, he enlisted in the army of the Papal States under the name of Watson.⁸³

While John Surratt was hiding in Canada and making good his

⁸⁰ J. F. Potter to W. H. Seward, Montreal, Oct. 23, 1865, [no number]; No. 236; No. 237; in U. S. Consul, Montreal, Dispatches to the State Department, Vol. VII, National Archives.

⁸¹ Haco, *op. cit.*, p. 98, gives Oct. 1, 1865, as the date of his arrival in London. There is no way of checking whether this is correct. C. M. Alexander, *The Career and Adventures of John H. Surratt* (Philadelphia, 1866), pp. 21-23, tells of Surratt's supposed adventures in London. He is pictured as going about as an old man with his male servant.

⁸² Stock, *op. cit.*, pp. 366-368, 371. H. de Sainte-Marie (*Ibid.*, p. 368) has Surratt being offered £10,000 by someone in London for writing up the assassination for publication. Besides receiving money in London, John could have gotten money from Fr. La Pierre which he had sent for through Dr. McMillan. Surratt must have had some source to supply him with funds sufficient for his travels. The dispatches from the Consul Wilding at Liverpool to the State Department for this period contain clippings from English papers which show the presence of many Southerners and Confederate sympathizers in England. One of these could very possibly be the party referred to by Sainte-Marie.

⁸³ Stock, *op. cit.*, pp. 371, 397-398. Dr. Neve was Rector of the College from 1863 to 1867. Cf. Cardinal Gasquet, *A History of the Venerable English College, Rome* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1920), pp. 256-258, 262-266. The anonymous *Life, Trial and Extraordinary Adventures of John H. Surratt, the Conspirator* (Philadelphia, 1867), p. 38, has Surratt entering a seminary in Rome before joining the Papal Zouaves.

escape, his mother was arrested, included in the speedy trial given to the other conspirators and was hanged for her complicity in the assassination. Certainly John knew of these things and the question naturally occurs: why did he not return to Washington to assist in his mother's defense? Had he then returned, he most surely would have been captured, included in the same military trial and executed. Since this was the fate of Mary Surratt whose only connection with the group of conspirators was through her son, for John it would have been even more certain.⁸⁴ He chose flight rather than return to certain death.

John Surratt knew very well the injustice dealt to his mother. His feelings on the affair are best expressed by an incident which occurred later in his life. When he filled out an application for a life insurance policy, he stated the cause of his mother's death as "murdered by the United States Government."⁸⁵

The army of the Papal States probably would have been an effective hiding place for John Surratt even if the United States had been interested in his apprehension. As John Watson, a Papal Zouave, he was unrecognized until an extremely improbable coincidence occurred. Henri Beaumont de Sainte-Marie, the former priest who had met Surratt and Weichmann for the only time a few years before at Texas, Maryland, was now also in the Papal Zouaves. He met John at Sezze and recognized him. In the conversation that followed, John told him of his being wanted and of his flight to avoid arrest.

On April 21, 1866, Sainte-Marie went to Rufus King, the American Minister to the Papal States, and told him of Surratt's presence at Sezze. Two days later he wrote to King from Velletri hinting quite strongly that 500 to 600 francs which he needed to obtain a discharge from the army would be a nice return for his information, thereby giving a clue to his character.⁸⁶

King meanwhile informed the Secretary of State of Surratt's being in the Papal States and asked for instructions. Acting Secretary F. W. Seward instructed King to have Sainte-Marie's statement verified and he added that he would have a check made

⁸⁴ Albert G. Riddle, *Recollections of War Times* (New York, 1895), p. 340, claims that the government offered to pardon Mrs. Surratt unconditionally if John would surrender himself. Riddle says that this message was conveyed to John Surratt in Baltimore and that "we were morally certain" he received it.

⁸⁵ Information supplied by Helen J. Campbell.

⁸⁶ Stock, *op. cit.*, p. 362.

on Sainte-Marie around Washington. Seward could find nothing derogatory about him. This dispatch requesting the sworn statement was not received by Rufus King until June 30th and it was July 14th before he secured the statement and sent it to the State Department.⁸⁷

By the time that Sainte-Marie made the sworn statement to Rufus King, his attitude had changed from that of one very disinterestedly performing his duty to that of an opportunist. At the end of June, he informed King he could be released from the Papal Army for fifty pounds, was willing to go to the United States to testify and expected compensation, possibly in the form of a reward of some sort.⁸⁸ When making the sworn statement, he told King of the danger to his life were it made known he had betrayed Surratt. He added to the story an aged mother in straitened circumstances, living in Canada.⁸⁹

On August 7th, Rufus King brought up the matter of Surratt and his extradition in an interview with Cardinal Antonelli, the Papal Secretary of State. The Cardinal assured him that if the United States wanted his surrender "there would probably be no difficulty in the way."⁹⁰ He was also willing to discharge Sainte-Marie.

The sworn statement of Sainte-Marie was forwarded to the War Department for their consideration after it had been received by the State Department.⁹¹ Why, is an unanswerable question. Extradition was under the jurisdiction of the State Department; Surratt's trial, were he extradited, would not be a military trial conducted by the War Department as a result of the *ex parte Milligan* decision in 1866. Whatever the reason Seward had for doing this, no action resulted on the part of the United States Government. Only after Rufus King had conveyed to the State Department the complaints of Sainte-Marie that little notice had been taken of his information about Surratt and his threats to reveal this information did Seward forward definite directions in regard to Surratt's case.⁹²

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 359-360, 363, 369-70, 370-372. Haco, *op. cit.*, p. 103, tells how Sainte-Marie and Surratt were supposedly trying to win the same Roman girl and how Sainte-Marie, losing out, swore revenge. Alexander, *op. cit.*, p. 35, has Sainte-Marie enlisting in the same company of Zouaves as Surratt so that he could capture him.

⁸⁸ Stock, *op. cit.*, p. 369.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 370, 372.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 377-378.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 379.

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 381-382.

Seward directed Rufus King to send someone to Velletri to identify Surratt. Sainte-Marie was to be "confidentially" paid \$250 in gold for the information which he had already given. King was also to ask Cardinal Antonelli if he would really give up Surratt upon authentic indictment and at the request of the Department. If the answer was negative, he was then to find out if His Holiness would enter into an extradition treaty which would enable the United States to obtain Surratt's surrender. Finally, King was to ask the Cardinal not to discharge either Surratt or Sainte-Marie from the Zouaves until he, Seward, had answered King's reply to these instructions.⁹³

Cardinal Antonelli agreed to the last request in an interview with Rufus King and J. C. Hooker, acting secretary of the American legation at Rome. He also promised to deliver up Surratt at the request of the State Department in the absence of an extradition treaty with the understanding that the United States would do the same under parallel circumstances. He was willing to do this even though, as he thought, it meant delivering up a criminal likely to suffer capital punishment, something which was against the policy of the Papal States.⁹⁴

King informed Seward of Cardinal Antonelli's decision and said he would pay Sainte-Marie the designated amount, hold out to him both the hope of further remuneration should Surratt be surrendered and of discharge from the Zouaves should he be needed as a witness in the United States. Thus, almost seven months after hearing of Surratt's presence in the Papal Zouaves, the State Department decided to set in motion the machinery which it hoped would result in his extradition. What was the reason for this delay?

Because of the Lambdin Milligan case, the trial of John Surratt before a military commission was ruled out. If extradited and brought back to the United States he would have to be tried before a jury. Secretary of State Seward and Judge Advocate General Holt knew as well as Secretary of War Stanton that Surratt could not be convicted as a principal in the assassination of President Lincoln in any court of law. There simply was no incriminating evidence to present to a jury.⁹⁵

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 383.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 379-80, 385-387.

⁹⁵ Loretta Clare Feiertag, *American Public Opinion on the Diplomatic Relations between the United States and the Papal States, 1847-1867* (Washington, 1933), p. 136.

Besides, President Andrew Johnson was against Surratt's extradition simply because he feared its consequences. The old rumors about Johnson being implicated in the assassination of Lincoln were still on the tongues of many of the Radical Republicans in Congress. A person like Surratt was just what they wanted. President Johnson believed "Such a person and in such a condition might, if approached, make almost any statement."⁹⁶ President Johnson had good grounds for fear, and subsequent investigation showed that he was definitely opposed to Surratt's extradition. It also appears that the change in governmental policy, indicated by Seward's instructions to King to begin the preliminaries of extradition, was caused by the agitation of the Radicals.⁹⁷

On November 6, while King's dispatch to the State Department was still in transit, Cardinal Antonelli had a telegram sent to Velletri ordering the arrest of John Surratt, alias John Watson. This was done in anticipation of the formal application of the United States in order to show the good will of the Papal government.⁹⁸ The next day, Captain de Lambilly at battalion headquarters in Velletri sent Sergeant Halyerid and six Zouaves to Tresulti where Surratt's company was on detachment. John, however, was in Veroli on leave so De Lambilly detailed Corporal Vanderstroeten of Surratt's company to arrest him. This he did without difficulty, and at Veroli he turned him over to Corporal Warrin who was in charge of the prison. It was a secure prison and two armed Zouaves stood guard during the night.⁹⁹

On the morning of November 8, John Surratt was awakened at 4:00 A.M.; he put on his gaiters and was given some coffee. The gate of the prison opened onto a platform beyond which there was a sheer drop of twenty to thirty-five feet onto the rocks below. The platform overlooked the countryside and had a balustrade to enable walkers to enjoy the view in safety. As Corporal Warrin and six Zouaves accompanied Surratt out of the prison, John asked

⁹⁶ Edgar T. Welles, ed., *Diary of Gideon Welles: Secretary of the Navy under Lincoln and Johnson* (Boston, 1911), III, p. 31. These are Johnson's words as reported by Welles.

⁹⁷ U. S. Cong. Report No. 33, p. 2, and "Surratt," *The Age* (Philadelphia), Dec. 17, 1866, p. 2, show Johnson's position. *The Press* (Philadelphia), Dec. 11, 1866, p. 4, and De Witt, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-148, illustrate the different positions of the legislative and executive departments of the government.

⁹⁸ Stock, *op. cit.*, pp. 389, 392.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 390, 393.

to stop at the latrine which was beside the prison gate. Then he grasped the balustrade in his hands and vaulted over it down onto the rocks below, his fall being broken by the filth from the barracks which was deposited there. Quickly he made his way into the valley below, thereby gaining a lead on the Zouave patrols who were sent in pursuit of him.¹⁰⁰

Though he injured his arm and back in his leap, John Surratt made his way eastward across the border of the Papal States to Sora, in the Kingdom of Italy, where he entered the hospital for treatment. After he had left the hospital, John Surratt went to Naples still wearing his Zouave uniform. Posing as an Englishman without money, who had deserted from the Zouaves, he asked to be allowed to stay in the local prison. There he remained for three days during which time the police questioned him. When they discovered that he had twelve scudi, he explained that he had asked to stay in prison in order to save his money.¹⁰¹

On the third day, he asked to be taken to the English Consul. Although he was without a passport or papers of any kind, he was able to convince the Consul that he was a Canadian and therefore, an English subject. The Consul secured him passage on a steamer to Alexandria, Egypt. Some Englishmen offered to pay for his board enroute and gave him a few francs besides. Then, still wearing his Zouave uniform and using the name of Walters, he boarded the steamer *Tripoli* at Naples for Alexandria on the evening of November 17, 1866.

While Surratt was making good his escape, Rufus King had not been idle. On November 10, he went to see Cardinal Antonelli and it was then that he first heard of Surratt's arrest and escape. Presuming that he would attempt to go out of the Papal States and into the Kingdom of Italy, King sent a messenger to Florence to try to secure Surratt's surrender from the Italian government.¹⁰²

As soon as King had informed George P. Marsh, the American Minister at Florence, that Surratt was in the hospital at Sora, Marsh requested the Italian government to detain him. Marsh sought this "until further proceedings can be had to ensure his surrender to such officers of the United States as shall be author-

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 390, 392, 393.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 395-397.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 388-389.

ized to receive him."¹⁰³ There were various delays on the part of the Italian government and when John Surratt left Naples on the *Tripoli*, no answer had been given to Marsh's request. Later, Marsh, in an interview with the Italian Secretary General of Foreign Affairs, received the impression "that the accused would not have been surrendered. . . ."¹⁰⁴

As soon as Frank Swan, the United States Consul at Naples, discovered that John Surratt had boarded the *Tripoli* for Alexandria, he telegraphed this information to both Rufus King at Rome and William Winthrop, the United States Consul at Malta. Because the ship did not take on coal at Naples it was to stop at Malta to refuel.¹⁰⁵ Winthrop went to the acting Chief Secretary at Malta the morning after he received Swan's telegram. He asked for the detention of Surratt until he could be returned to the United States and also sent both a public dispatch and a private note requesting the same. That very day, Monday, November 19, the *Tripoli* arrived at Malta, but because the vessel was in quarantine Winthrop could not communicate with it. Only about 4:00 P.M., as the *Tripoli* was leaving, did a reply come to Winthrop's request. It was denied despite the fact that the United States had a treaty of extradition with Malta.¹⁰⁶

Rufus King had telegraphed Charles Hale, the American Consul at Alexandria, about Surratt's presence on the *Tripoli*. But because the cable from Malta to Egypt was broken, King's message was probably sent to Egypt on the *Tripoli*, being put aboard it when the stop was made at Malta for coal.¹⁰⁷ Winthrop also telegraphed a message to Charles Hale from Malta via Constantinople asking him to arrest Surratt.¹⁰⁸ Upon receipt of Winthrop's telegram, Hale proceeded to make the arrest of John Surratt when he disembarked from the *Tripoli* on November 23.

Surratt was taken by the soldiers to a safe place within the walls of the quarantine area where he was interrogated, but he would only reply, "I have nothing to say; I want nothing but

¹⁰³ U. S. Minister to Italy, Florence, Dispatches to the State Department, Vol. II, No. 168, enclosures I and H, National Archives.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 169.

¹⁰⁵ Stock, *op. cit.*, p. 395.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 400. Alexander, *op. cit.*, p. 95, states that the Governor at Malta did not deny the request but merely refused to answer it.

¹⁰⁷ Stock, *op. cit.*, pp. 393-396.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 400.

what is right." The quarantine lasted until November 29 and then Surratt was taken to the government prison.¹⁰⁹

Hale sent a cable to Secretary of State Seward informing him of Surratt's capture and suggested that a man-of-war be sent to return him to the United States. Actually no formal proceedings had been used in Surratt's capture in Alexandria. It seems that the Egyptian officials simply complied with Hale's request to assist in arresting him. As Hale himself stated, "Although the 'Extradition' was thus accepted as a matter of course, I respectfully suggest that it may be well that I should be instructed to express to His Highness the acknowledgments of the President."¹¹⁰ Hale informed the British legal vice-Consul and Judge, Mr. Francis, of the whole affair and gave him leave to visit John Surratt. Francis made no attempt to see him, and Surratt made no claim to British citizenship as he had done at Naples by saying he was a Canadian.¹¹¹

At the time of Surratt's capture, Rufus King had already asked through the State Department for a warship, and until it was needed, it was to be stationed at Civita Vecchi.¹¹² Then while Surratt was still on his way to Alexandria on the *Tripoli* and his apprehension seemed likely, King requested a vessel from the Commander of the European Squadron, Admiral Goldsborough, after consulting with the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Gustavus Fox, who was then in Italy.¹¹³ On December 10th, the warship *Swatara*, commanded by Captain William N. Jeffers, arrived at Civita Vecchia. On December 14th Rufus King placed Henri Beaumont de Sainte-Marie aboard the *Swatara* as a passenger.¹¹⁴ Sainte-Marie had been discharged from the Papal

¹⁰⁹ U. S. Consul, Alexandria, Dispatches to the State Department, Vol. IV, Nos. 66, 68, National Archives. The quotations above are from these dispatches. Alexander, *op. cit.*, p. 96-98, has Hale using his servant Pheroda to capture Surratt. He deceives Surratt by volunteering to help him and then leads him to a place where two other servants are waiting. Together, they capture him.

¹¹⁰ Alexandria Dispatches, No. 72.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Besides conducting Surratt to the United States, King stated that a U. S. vessel at Civita Vecchia would gratify Cardinal Antonelli who suggested that an American vessel be added to those of other nations at Civita Vecchia. Such would also protect Americans in Rome. Stock, *op. cit.*, pp. 388-389.

¹¹³ Stock, *op. cit.*, p. 393-395.

¹¹⁴ Stock, *op. cit.*, pp. 406-407, gives the date of the *Swatara's* arrival at Civita Vecchia as Dec. 12, and its departure as Dec. 13. The dates I use are from the log of the Screw Sloop *Swatara*, attached to the European Squadron, No. 4, National Archives.

Zouaves through the efforts of Rufus King, who thought that he might be needed in Alexandria to identify John Surratt. The *Swatara* arrived at Alexandria on December 20. The following day, as recorded in the *Swatara's* log, "At 1 P.M. received on board a person delivered by the U. S. Consul General, Mr. Charles Hale supposed to be John H. Surratt one of the Conspirators implicated in the assassination of the late President Lincoln."¹¹⁵ Captain Jeffer's clerk recognized John Surratt, "having seen him often about Washington."¹¹⁶ On December 26th, the *Swatara* left Alexandria, after receiving orders to stop next at Port Mahon to receive further orders from Admiral Goldsborough.¹¹⁷ Not finding him there, the *Swatara* went to Villa Franca, where it received orders to go to the United States. This it did, stopping only at Madeira for coal and provisions.¹¹⁸

When Rufus King had placed Henri de Sainte-Marie on the *Swatara* at Civita Vecchia thinking he might be of some help in identifying John Surratt, King also intended that he would go to the United States on the *Swatara* to testify against Surratt.¹¹⁹ Captain Jeffers would not allow Sainte-Marie to go ashore at Alexandria. Sainte-Marie had been quite loquacious in telling the crew of the *Swatara* his various accomplishments and Captain Jeffers feared that he would "babble" if let ashore.¹²⁰ This refusal irked Sainte-Marie and he finally left the *Swatara* at Villa Franca, "at his own request, by direction of Rear Admiral Goldsborough."¹²¹ At the insistence of Rufus King, Mr. Aldis, the American Consul at Nice, persuaded Sainte-Marie to continue to the United States. The United States Minister at Paris, John Dix, secured passage for him on a steamer which left for New York on February 2, 1867.¹²²

The *Swatara* had left Nice on January 8th. Towards the end of the month, the ship's arrival in the United States was expected

¹¹⁵ Log of the *Swatara*, Dec. 21, 1866.

¹¹⁶ Alexandria Dispatches, [no number] Hale to Seward, Dec. 24, 1866, Dec. 27, 1866.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 72. This is a different dispatch from the one cited in the preceding note. They were both probably sent together since the date of reception, Jan. 22, 1867, is the same for both.

¹¹⁸ Log of the *Swatara*, Jan. 23-Feb. 18, 1867.

¹¹⁹ Stock, *op. cit.*, pp. 406-407.

¹²⁰ U. S. Cong. Report No. 33, p. 17.

¹²¹ Log of the *Swatara*, Jan. 8, 1867.

¹²² Stock, *op. cit.*, pp. 412-413. For Sainte-Marie's version of the story, see pp. 411-412.

daily. However, it was feared that the *Swatara* could not dock at Washington, Annapolis or Baltimore since all these ports were closed due to ice which extended south of Washington for forty miles.¹²³ President Johnson feared that the Radical Republicans would try to suborn Surratt and so ordered Admiral Goldsborough to prevent any unauthorized person from communicating with him, while he was still on board the *Swatara*.¹²⁴ In the middle of February, when the *Swatara* arrived in the area of Chesapeake Bay, it encountered some floating ice but it was able to proceed up the Potomac River. It docked at the Washington Navy Yard and John Surratt was arrested and taken from the vessel directly to jail by the United States Marshal, David S. Gooding, there to await his trial.¹²⁵

The trial of John Surratt was held in the District of Columbia City Hall and was conducted by the Criminal Court of the District of Columbia.¹²⁶ The charge was that of complicity in the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. District Attorney Edward Carrington and his assistant, Nathaniel Wilson, were the prosecution. As assistant counsels they had Albert G. Riddle and Edwards Pierrepont. Surratt's lawyer was Joseph H. Bradley, who had as his assistants Richard T. Merrick and Joseph H. Bradley, Jr. Judge George Fisher presided.

The trial began on June 10, 1867, at 10:00 A.M., but choosing the jury took until Tuesday, June 18. The prosecution tried to build up its case on the fact that Surratt associated frequently with Booth, relying mainly on the testimony of Louis Weichmann.¹²⁷ They also attempted to show that he was present in Washington both during the day and evening of April 14, 1865. This as we have already seen was not proved. The prosecution also rehearsed the old Conspiracy Trial, taking that trial as true and just, and now trying to prove the thesis upon which the case against one of the defendants of that trial had rested: the guilt

¹²³ Welles, *op. cit.*, III, 29.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, III, p. 31.

¹²⁵ U. S. Cong. Report No. 33, p. 17; Log of the *Swatara*, Feb. 19, 1867. The actual warrant for his arrest may be found in *U. S. v. John H. Surratt*, No. 5920, National Archives.

¹²⁶ Inquiries of this author at the present Municipal Court and the Federal Court of the District of Columbia revealed that prior to 1909, there were only magistrates at this Municipal Court. The Federal Court of the District, Criminal Division, is the successor to the Criminal Court which tried John Surratt. The records of this case are now in the National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹²⁷ *Surratt Trial*, I, 369-389; esp. 371-372.

of Mrs. Mary Surratt in the assassination was in consequence of her son's guilt.¹²⁸

There was some delay because of the illness of the presiding judge,¹²⁹ but District Attorney Carrington began his argument to the jury for conviction on Saturday, July 27th, and concluded it on the following Tuesday. Both Merrick and the senior Bradley presented the defense and finished it on August 2nd. Next, Edwards Pierrepont spoke for the prosecution from August 3rd to the 6th. The jury of eight southerners and four northerners began to deliberate on the following day. Three days later they announced that they could not agree on a verdict and asked for a dismissal of the case. John Surratt, seeking exoneration, would not consent to the latter and so was given over to the custody of the marshal to be returned to jail.¹³⁰

Although the vote of the jury was not announced, it was believed that the jury was seven to five for acquittal.¹³¹ Judge Fisher, before dismissing the court, ordered the name of Joseph Bradley, Sr., stricken from the roll of attorneys of the Court because Bradley had accused him of using insulting language as the Judge descended from his bench for recess on July 2.¹³²

The motion for another trial for John Surratt seems to have begun very soon after the first trial. However, because of an act of Congress, the jury for this second trial could not have been selected before February, 1868. On February 4, Surratt was re-indicted and his trial set for February 24.¹³³ At that time the House of Representatives was trying to impeach President Andrew Johnson and Surratt's trial was either neglected or else forgotten.

Early the following June, Edward Carrington informed O. H. Browning, the Attorney General, that he wished to *nolle prosequi* the charge of murder against John Surratt and then indict him for conspiracy. Carrington thought he could obtain a conviction

¹²⁸ Rev. J. A. Walter, "The Surratt Case," *The Church News* (Aug. 16, 1891). "I rather think the mother is being tried again today," is a statement attributed to Joseph Bradley, Sr. See Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

¹²⁹ E. Pierrepont to W. H. Seward, Wash., June 15, 1867, in Seward Collection, Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester. Also, *The Evening Star* June 15-18, 1867.

¹³⁰ *Surratt Trial*, II, 1379.

¹³¹ *The Evening Star*, Aug. 10, 1867.

¹³² "Order of Judge Fisher to Strike Bradley, Sr. from Rolls," Aug. 10, 1867, in *U. S. v. John H. Surratt*, No. 5920, National Archives.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, No. 6594; David Miller DeWitt, *The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln* (New York, 1909), p. 219.

by this method of procedure.¹⁸⁴ This charge was filed in court on June 18, 1868, and four days later Surratt was arraigned, pleading "not guilty." That same day he was released on \$40,000 bail.¹⁸⁵ There was no action on Surratt's case that summer and the two motions to quash submitted to the court by Joseph Bradley, Jr., on July 10 and 15 were ignored.¹⁸⁶

On September 22, John Surratt filed a special plea asking for a dismissal of his case on the grounds that he was included in the general pardon issued by President Johnson on July 4, 1868. Moreover, on the preceeding day Edward Carrington had entered a *nolle prosequi* regarding the case. The court announced its decision to dismiss the case on November 5, 1868.¹⁸⁷

After this dismissal, John Surratt spent some time in Southern Maryland. On December 30 of either 1868 or 1869, he delivered a lecture at the Odd Fellows Hall on 7th Street between D and E Streets in Washington. This was described as a lecture on the "Plan Arranged to Kidnap not Murder President Lincoln."¹⁸⁸

For a while, John was in the commission business and in 1870, he secured a job teaching in Rockville, Maryland. On December 6 of that year, he gave a lecture in the Rockville Courthouse. It began at 7:00 P.M. The Rockville Cornet Band played a lively tune and John took off his overcoat, revealing a "manuscript book" to which he referred occasionally during his lecture. He told of his association with John Wilkes Booth in the kidnapping attempts, described how he was in Elmira on the night of the assassination and then told the audience of his flight, capture and return to the United States. He talked for one and a quarter hours and when he finished, the band played "Dixie." An improvised concert followed during which Surratt "was quite a lion among the ladies present."¹⁸⁹

Sometime between 1870 and 1872, Surratt left Rockville and secured an appointment as a teacher in Saint Joseph's School, Emmitsburg, Maryland. At that time the school was held in what

¹⁸⁴ *U. S. v. John H. Surratt*, No. 5920.

¹⁸⁵ This amount is given in the document entitled: "Recognizance, June 22, 1868," *ibid.* Laughlin, *op. cit.*, p. 288, gives the amount of bail as \$25,000.

¹⁸⁶ *U. S. v. John H. Surratt*, No. 5920.

¹⁸⁷ "Special Plea, Certificate of Decision of General Term," in *ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *Broadsides Portfolio* 205, No. 62, Rare Books Division, LC.

¹⁸⁹ *The Evening Star*, Dec. 7, 1870. The complete text of the lecture is printed here. Lewis, *op. cit.*, pp. 224-225, has the audience being bored by Surratt's lecture. *The Evening Star's* account mentions nothing about this.

was known as Firemen's Hall, located directly opposite Saint Joseph's Catholic Church. He rattled his classes and would resort to physical punishment to maintain discipline. On older boys, some of them twenty or twenty-one, he used his fists. The younger boys John would beat with a paddle after he had stretched them over a special punishment desk which he had designed. "The Old Bear," as the boys nicknamed him, swore at them in French when they overstepped the limits of his discipline.¹⁴⁰

While he was at Emmitsburg, John Surratt liked to gather with the other men of the town at Gelwick's Drug Store where they would discuss politics and current events. Being a rather good shot, he also enjoyed target shooting with them.¹⁴¹

In 1872, John married Mary Victorine Hunter, a second cousin of Francis Scott Key. He moved to Baltimore and secured a position with the Old Bay Line where his brother Isaac was working.¹⁴² John worked for this company for more than forty years until his retirement in August, 1915, at which time he had risen to the position of treasurer and auditor of the firm.

John Surratt never discussed his flight, capture and trial with his family and friends.¹⁴³ At one time he did write the story of his association with the conspirators at the insistence of his son, William. *McClure's Magazine* rejected the story, commenting that it was doubtful anyone would be interested in what he had to say, and John burned the manuscript.¹⁴⁴

Early in March, 1916, John Surratt was stricken with pleurisy. When he had apparently recovered, he suffered a relapse and contracted pleuro-pneumonia. It was of this last illness that he died, at about 9:00 P.M. on Friday, April 21, 1916. The funeral was held on the following Monday from his home on 1004 West Lanvale Street in Baltimore. A Solemn High Requiem Mass was offered at Saint Pius' Church by the pastor, the Reverend John E. Dunn, and John Harrison Surratt was laid to rest in Bonnie Brae Cemetery.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ Frederic Welty to T. E. Bussey, Philadelphia, November 23, 1938; Thomas E. Bussey, Memorandum, Baltimore, November 14, 1938. Both in the possession of Helen J. Campbell, Yorktown, Virginia.

¹⁴¹ Bussey Memorandum, *ibid.*

¹⁴² *Sun*, Apr. 22, 1916.

¹⁴³ Margaret Bearden informs me that he had 7 children, but only 3 daughters and a son survived infancy.

¹⁴⁴ Information supplied by Helen J. Campbell.

¹⁴⁵ *Sun*, Apr. 22, 1916.

SIDELIGHTS

THE DEPARTING CONFESSIONS OF THREE ROGUES, 1765

Edited by FRED SHELLEY

Accounts of crimes and confessions of condemned criminals were steady fare in colonial America. Occasionally, as in the one quoted below, we get a different view of earlier days in Maryland. One of three criminals, John Grimes, spent some weeks or months in Maryland before going north. The autobiographical account he gives throws sidelights on the problems of indentured servants and administration of justice in Maryland and the other colonies. It is from a broadside in the Library Company of Philadelphia printed probably in 1765. The full title of the broadside is *The Last Speech, Confession, Birth, Parentage and Education, of John Grimes, John Fagan, and John Johnson, alias Johnson Cochran, who were executed at Gallows-Hill, in the City of Burlington, on Wednesday the 28th of August, 1765, for Burglary and Felony, committed in the County of Burlington* (Evans 10036).

I John Grimes, aged Twenty-two Years, was born in the West of *Ireland*, in a small Village, of low, mean Parents, who had neither Ability nor Opportunity to give me any Education, so that from my Infancy I was brought up to Idleness and Thieving, which, instead of being corrected in me, was rather encouraged; at last I became so notorious, that I was obliged to leave that Part of the Country, and come to *Dublin*, and being bred to no Business, worked on board Ships at the Keys, but following my old Trade, I was dismissed from all Employment for Dishonesty and Thieving; I subsisted some Time in that City by joining a Gang of Street Robbers and Pick Pockets, but Justice overtaking them, and the Heads of the Gang being hanged, and others impeaching me, I was once more obliged to abscond, and from thence went over to *Liverpool*, but being known there, I travelled to *Bristol*, and from thence to *London*, following my Trade of Thieving all along; and there turning Foot Pad, and robbing a Gentleman at *Temple-Bar*, I was taken and committed to *Newgate*, and tried at the *Old-Bailey*; and as it was the first Crime I was known to be guilty of, I was cast for Transportation, and accordingly came over in the *Dolphin*, Capt. *Cramer*, to *Patapsco*, in *Maryland*, and was sold as a Servant to an Iron-Work, but I soon run away from them, and carried off with me as much Goods out of a Store I had broke open, as made me pass for a Pedlar, when I came into *New-Castle*; from *New Castle* I went to *New York*, where I associated with a Gang who for a long Time had

infested that City; but being obliged to leave that Place, I returned to *New-Castle*, where I pretended to be an *Irish* Pedlar newly come over; but I could not help following what was almost natural to me, but once more took to Thieving and House-breaking, and after performing several Exploits in that Way, I at last stole a Horse, for which I was apprehended, tried, and burnt in the Hand; while I lay in this Gaol, I could not resist the Temptation of Stealing, the Evil was so ingrafted in my wicked Heart; the Affair was this, a Man being in that Gaol, under Sentence of Death, the Sheriff procured a Person to execute him, and paid the Money before hand; but to secure the Fellow from running away before he had done the job, he put him in Gaol, where he had not lain long before I robb'd him of all his Money, which I spent idly: I lay a considerable Time in this Gaol, till a Gentleman from *Maryland*, upon my signing an Indenture to serve for some Time for the Fees, took me out, but instead of fulfilling my Engagement, I robbed the Gentleman of his Horse, and all he had about him, and again push'd for *New York*. In the Gaol at *New-Castle*, I had Information from a Prisoner who was well acquainted in *New-Jersey*, of the House of Joseph Burr, for the robbing of which I now suffer. In the City of *New-York* I first became acquainted with my unhappy Fellow-Sufferers, from the City we travelled in Company towards *West-Jersey*, and parted near *Mount-Holly*, when I went across *Delaware*, into *Pennsylvania*, and there stole the Watch of *Edward Hill*, and then returned into the *Jersies*, met my old Comrades, and with them planned and executed the aforesaid Robbery, we then stole Horses to carry us off, but getting drunk, we quarrelled in the Woods about dividing our Booty, when I was beat in so terrible a Manner that I was not able to make my Escape, and the other two going to sleep, during which Time the Country being alarmed, we were apprehended and brought to *Burlington*, and now are deservedly to suffer for this and our former Crimes. I die a Member of the *Roman Catholic* Communion, and in Peace and Charity with all Men, hoping GOD will pardon all my Sins and Offences, and forgive my Enemies.

I John Fagan, was born in the City of *Dublin*, in the Kingdom of *Ireland*, in the Year 1737, of poor but honest Parents, who brought me up in the Roman Catholic Religion, till I arrived at the Age of Fourteen, when I was put an Apprentice to a Joiner and House-Carpenter, with whom I lived between 4 and 5 Years, and falling into bad Company, I fell first from my Duty towards GOD, and then towards Man; for in a small Space of Time, Drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking and the Conversation of lewd and disorderly Women, became the fatal Objects of my Thoughts as well as Practice.

This Course of Life not answering my Purpose, and fearing the fatal Consequences that might attend my Stay, I thought it safest to embark for *America*, which I did in the Year 1756, where I had not been long till I engaged in his Majesty's Service, wherein I continued till the Troops were discharged, after which I engaged to Work at my Trade at the *Highlands* above *New-York*, where I wrought some Time, but my Inclinations still

hankering after lewd Company, I frequented bad Houses, in one of which I became acquainted with my unhappy Fellow-Sufferers; and after some short Acquaintance, we left *New-York* together, and travelled into *New-Jersey*, where we committed many Crimes, particularly robbing the House of *Joseph Burr*, near the City of *Burlington*, and the same Night with my Accomplices, stole three Horses, in Order to make our Escapes to *New-York*, but getting Drunk by the Way, we fell out, and was presently after apprehended, and brought to *Burlington* Gaol, where we were confined, and several Times attempted an Escape, but was prevented. Good People, Take Warning by my Fate, I am, you see a young Man, who by my Sins have shortened my Days, and brought myself to this shameful (but deserved) Death. Take heed to yourselves how you lead your Life. Live not as I have done, lest you come to the sad and untimely End I am now come to. Break not the Sabbath Day, and keep not Company with wicked Men, and lewd Women, as I have done. Those are the great Evils which have brought this Sorrow upon me. Avoid all Manner of Sin, even the smallest, for from one little Sin, Men easily fall to the Commission of greater ones. I die in the Faith of the *Roman* Catholick Profession, and I pray heartily to God to keep you from all Evil: And I beseech you to pray for me, that God would have Mercy upon my poor Soul.

I John Johnson, alias *Johnson Cochran*, was born in the City of *Dublin*, in the Kingdom of *Ireland*, of very good Parents, who brought me up to good Learning, in the Protestant Religion, and never did profess any other: I was put to School till I was 15 Years of Age; after which I was put an Apprentice to a Silver Smith, but having too good a Master and Mistress, I left them and got acquainted with many idle and wicked Men, and lewd Women, who led me into all Manner of Vice, particularly Shop-lifting: In breaking open the House of *Joseph Jennings*, in *Waterford*, I very narrowly escaped being taken as I was getting out at the Window, from whence I stole some Cash, Cloaths, and many other Articles; and then made off towards the North *Ireland*.

After having collected a considerable Booty by Means of such Villanies, I embarked on board of the Ship *King George*, Capt. *Mackie*, bound for *Philadelphia*; here I continued some Time, and not finding any Encouragement at my Trade, I betook myself to my former Way of Living, viz: Whoring, Drinking, and such like Vices; and getting acquainted with some lewd People, I fell to picking of Pockets, and stole many Pocket Books and Watches, to a considerable Value, but finding *Philadelphia* too hot to hold me, I removed to *New-York*, where I soon became acquainted with People of the same dishonest Profession as myself, and having good Encouragement, joined with a Company of them, and robbed several People in the Street, of Money and Effects and shared them amongst my Accomplices, after some Time I became acquainted with my Fellow-Sufferers, who were of the same Profession, and we all three agreed to travel together into *New-Jersey*; and our Inclination still leading us to Mischief, we made several Attempts on different Persons on the Highway,

and finding but little Encouragement, we moved farther into *West-Jersey*, where we followed the like Courses, but with little Success.

After which, from the Information of one of my Fellow-Sufferers, the House of *Joseph Burr* was thought worthy of our Attention, which Robbery we effected the 13th of *July*, at Night; then returned to the City of *Burlington*, and stole three Horses with a Design to make an Escape to *New-York*, but losing our Road, and getting Drunk and quarrelling, we were pursued and apprehended the 18th Day of the same Month, and committed to *Burlington* Gaol, and on the 20th Instant, took our Trials, and received Sentence of Death. To this I shall add, I heartily wish that the Number of Malefactors, may not encrease, but diminish; so I pray God to convert all those that abandon themselves to wicked and illegal Courses: I now die in the Faith of the Protestant Religion; and I pray God to have Mercy upon my Soul.

GUANO ISLANDS FOR SALE

LEONARD M. FANNING *

With all the selling and transferring of guano islands from discoverer to discoverer's assignee to *his* assignee *ad infinitum*, what was a United States guano island anyway? Was it a private title, a piece of real estate? In 1872, the Guano Island Act was amended to include a section enabling the "widow, heir, executor, or administrator of a discoverer, who dies before perfecting proof of discovery or fully complying with the provisions of the statute, to obtain the benefits of the discovery." The Act of 1856 had established "derelict" islands found by American citizens to contain guano, as islands "appertaining to the United States." Because of the "widow's clause," widows and other heirs of island discoverers—sometimes prompted by lawyers—wondered whether, after all, they did not have a claim to a guano island and the profits of the guano corporation exploiting, or supposed to be exploiting it.

On January 26, 1875, Captain Peter Duncan, master of the Navassa Phosphate Company's brig *Romance*, died. Isabella, his widow, found papers in his chest which revived memories of their early married life when Peter served old Captain E. O. Cooper and was master of the little schooner *Ocean Belle*. A faded copy of his Oath of Discovery to Navassa Island caught her eye. She remembered clearly, when they lived at 33 South Broad Street in Baltimore—after his return from taking the first laborers to the island—his making the affidavit. Less clear in her mind—as indeed they had been at that time—were the subsequent transactions between her husband and old Captain Cooper and his son, Captain E. K., by which Peter had conveyed his title or deed to Navassa Island to them. She seemed to recall that Peter had continued to own the island, or that it had been reconveyed to him, for a period shortly after the discovery

* Copyright by author, 1957.

before he had finally deeded it over. Certain papers and notes among Peter's effects stirred questions about the transfer.

Peter had been a steady man. Never without a ship since the day they married, he had been master of the *Romance* from her commissioning in February, 1858. Year in and year out for seventeen years, the *Romance* had made the run between Baltimore and Navassa Island, West Indies, almost as regular as a ferry, with Peter in command. That was more than most American shipmasters could say, particularly since the war with only foreign ships in the harbors, it seemed, and American seamen idle ashore, drinking the time away and roistering and going to pot in waterfront taverns. Peter owed it all to the Coopers, and to the Navassa Phosphate Company. Then, too, Isabella had been thrifty. She thought no more of the deeds—not until eight years later when she became one of the widows who wondered whether she should not have inherited a guano island. Perhaps the idea came to her upon reading Captain E. K. Cooper's obituary in the Baltimore papers. She wrote the company for information about the transfer of Peter's deed as discoverer. The Company was evasive.

Eight more years passed during which time the *Romance* continued to bring in Navassa guano and the Navassa Phosphate Company, to make its "millions." Either Mrs. Duncan's dream of guano riches would not down and she went to see a lawyer, or it was the other way round. A lawyer came to see her and read her the "widow's clause" and convinced her that even though it had been inserted in the Act three years before her husband's death and thirteen years had elapsed since she had laid him away, it was not too late for her to sue. She should get her share of every dollar of Navassa Island guano sold since Peter raised the flag on the island September 19, 1857.

The matter hinged on the assignment. Did Peter ever really assign Navassa Island to E. K. Cooper? Under what circumstances was the assignment made, and was Peter properly compensated? She could remember no compensation. Peter simply found an island and deeded it over to the Coopers, and continued to be the captain of one of their ships. She remembered he was rewarded by the command of the *Romance*, but that was not "compensation." And why had the company evaded her questions? Now the lawyer wrote on behalf of Isabella Duncan and demanded the company produce the deeds. He got no farther than the widow had. In 1888 Isabella Duncan filed suit in the United States Circuit Court at Baltimore.

She asked for a dower in Navassa Island. She claimed Duncan was in possession September 19, 1857, to November 18, 1857, when he allegedly assigned or conveyed title and interest to E. K. Cooper and "by mesne assignments the title to said island became invested in the Navassa Phosphate Company." She averred there was a reconveyance to her husband about January 1, 1860, and subsequent conveyance to E. K. Cooper but "she has not said deeds of assignment, but believes them in possession of the Navassa Phosphate Company." She requested that they and all title deeds be produced. "By reason of legal and other impediments, and through no fault of hers, she has heretofore believed that a

demand for said dower rights would be fruitless." She demanded "an accounting of profits and net value to determine dower interest therein."

The company demurred.

On July 5, 1888, Judge Morris sustained the demurrer and dismissed the petition. He held that the Act of Congress of August 18, 1856 (the Guano Islands Act) "does not convey upon the discoverer a title to the land of the island such as will entitle the widow to dower therein as against a purchaser from him, although she has not joined in his assignment or executed a release." As to the nature of the right granted the discoverer under the Act, the judge held that "the right recognized in the discoverer and his assigns . . . is not a title as proprietor of the soil, but merely a commercial privilege, by which the enterprise of obtaining the guano discovered on such islands is protected so that it may be obtained for shipment to the United States, or elsewhere, if permitted."

An appeal was filed in the Supreme Court of the United States January 9, 1891. The decision of Judge Morris was affirmed January 19 of that year. Justice Gray, writing the opinion, stated, "It is impossible to find in this Act any manifestation of an intention of Congress that the interest of the discoverer should be subject to dower, or even that it should be considered as real estate rather than as personal property." Hence, people who "bought" a United States guano island were not getting title to real estate but, rather, a commercial privilege.

While he lived, there is no evidence that Duncan ever considered himself entitled to a share in Navassa Island. Isabella was simply indulging a widow's dream of guano treasure. The Guano Age might be on its way out, but heirs of assignees and die-hard stockholders (with worthless guano company securities in their attic trunks), could not down that spark of hope, until it was extinguished by the court decision in the case of Mrs. Duncan.

REVIEWS OF RECENT BOOKS

Albert Gallatin, Jeffersonian Financier and Diplomat. By RAYMOND WALTERS, JR. New York: Macmillan, 1957. viii, 461 pp. \$7.

The author of this book hoped that "a full and scholarly biography" would increase our understanding of the period of our history which Gallatin influenced. He has succeeded admirably in producing a scholarly and definitive book. He has also given us a delightfully interesting view of Gallatin and his times. The book is crowded with factual details, so well arranged that they do not obscure the thread of the narrative, in fact they make it more vivid, a rare achievement in this field. It is a pity that the publisher yielded to the current urge to collect the foot-notes at the end of the book. If they had been at the bottom of the pages of the text, the curiosity of the professional historian could have been satisfied more conveniently.

In the course of his study of Gallatin, the author made a remarkable discovery. For over forty years historians and others, both in the United States and in Gallatin's native Switzerland, have used the diary of Gallatin's son James (Count Gallatin [great grandson], ed., *The Diary of James Gallatin* [London, New York, 1914]) as a source for Gallatin's diplomatic activities. Two years ago, this reviewer found that in Geneva a French translation of it was being used as an authoritative source for tracing the activities of Madame de Staël and her circle. Some scholars had been worried about discrepancies they had noticed, but it remained for Raymond Walters to reveal the reason: the diary was a "complete hoax." For the historian, especially the diplomatic historian, this one discovery would make the whole biographical study worth while. (See also article in *AHR*, July, 1957, pp. 878-885.) In addition, however, we have the first life of a very important statesman told in a book which combines accurate scholarship with good literary style and readability.

Among his very wide list of acquaintances and friends, Gallatin numbered many of the well-to-do merchants of early nineteenth-century Maryland. His son married the daughter of a French refugee who settled in Baltimore. The interest of Marylanders in Walters' book is increased by the frequent references to his relations with people of this state.

DOROTHY MACKAY QUINN

Frederick, Md.

The Frontier Mind, A Cultural Analysis of the Kentucky Frontiersman.

By ARTHUR K. MOORE. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957. x, 264 pp. \$5.

The civilization that flowered in the Kentucky wilderness surpassed that on any other tramontane frontier. The contrast is striking enough to provoke the question, Why did these frontiersmen, living in their rustic castles, called "stations," and engaging in a bloody and obstinate battle with the Indians, excel so quickly in the difficult arts of civilization? One theory would account for this superior civilization by the number and quality of the "culture bearers"—see, for example, Louis B. Wright's *Culture on the Moving Frontier*—and another might resemble Toynbee's "growth stage" of differentiation and diversity. The author of *The Frontier Mind*, however, is much less impressed with this early flowering than he is with its failure to live up to its promise. As a matter of fact, he finds in this "cultural analysis of the Kentucky frontiersman" the seeds of the anti-intellectualism, the provincialism, and the isolationism of the American West.

The theme is not entirely original. Henry Nash Smith in his *Virgin Land*, an excellent study of the American West as symbol and myth, has pointed out how the agrarian tradition has paired the contradictory ideas of nature and civilization. By concentrating on the Kentucky frontiersman, Professor Moore attempts to show how the experience of settling a Garden has left a residue of primitivism in the American character.

From the great diversity of elements in the early Kentucky civilization, the author has selected the meanly picaresque as the typical and enduring. In a chapter entitled "The Rejection of Athens" he shows how the civilization that began in Lexington succumbed, not to the enormity of frontier barbarism, but rather to a preference for the book of nature; and the results have been extremely influential on the course of American history:

Kentucky saw it all—the hungering pilgrims descending like locusts upon the fabled garden, there to rend and devour nature's bounty; the hopeful planning of apostles of the Enlightenment and the blighting of their fair programs; the legendary frontiersman, embodiment of several kinds of romantic desiring, turning an alligator horse and confronting the metropolis with the image of its own dark unconscious mind. Out of the garden came abundance without fulfillment, religious fanaticism without religious unity, the profession of equalitarianism and lusting after class distinctions, envy of superior merit and rank anti-intellectualism. Men sought to live, as they had journeyed, by the garden myth, and accomplished works consistent with their materialism and secularism.

In reaching his conclusions the author has been honest, if not entirely convincing. No malice is apparent, no bias, and a minimum of special

pleading. However, he may be taking the words of the frontiersmen too seriously, and he may be somewhat taken in by their exaggeration. It is true that many of the virtues they extolled were not those of modern suburbia, and there are intelligent Kentuckians today who like to think that a clergyman or Congressman need not be literate to be successful. But in the main the Kentucky culture seems to have followed the broad middle class current, with eddies of both primitivism and aristocratic ways.

The Kentucky frontier had more than its share of men of wealth and culture—Henry Clay, George Nicholas, Caleb Wallace, Matthew Walton, the Bullitts, the Breckinridges, and the Todds. Fortunately, too, it had its woodsmen and its warriors. Daniel Boone killed only one Indian, but his skill as a woodsman and his relaxed manner gave the colonists courage. John Filson made him famous as the "natural hero" and certainly no one wishes to pull the amiable Daniel from his niche in the pantheon of American heroes. But he had little, and wanted less, to say about the conduct of affairs in the colony. Simon Kenton was incredibly tough, brave, and audacious; and his words with the Indians were bullets. The warriors deserved and got respect, but most of them probably thought longingly of the time when they could settle down in civilized communities.

The Old Frontier was shot through with paradoxes. To assess its influence on the course of American history is a difficult and complicated business. Professor Moore's book stands as another rejection of the now somewhat battered Turner thesis, but it, too, is probably an over simplification. Romantic and horrible, heroic and mean, culturally brash and pridefully illiterate, the frontier drew to it all sorts and conditions of men; and their motives were those of all men: escape from the *taedium vitae*, economic betterment, adventure, and the ancient dream of an earthly paradise. Its myths endure. To what extent America has tried to live by them is still a question.

JOHN WALTON

The Johns Hopkins University

The Birth of the Republic, 1763-89. By EDMUND S. MORGAN. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956. ix, 157 pp. \$3.

In this small volume in the *Chicago History of American Civilization* Professor Morgan of Yale interprets the history of the American Revolution in terms of a "search for principles." He sees the colonists as having begun their search in 1765, when the Stamp Act Congress assembled in New York to deny the authority of Parliament to tax an unrepresented people. Not that that people sought representation: a small number of delegates from the colonies would have had little influence in Parliament. The intent of the "great majority" was rather to distinguish between Parliament's admitted right to legislate and its usurpation of the right of the colonial assemblies to levy taxes. Parliament responded with derision to this distinction between legislation and taxation.

By 1774, after the Tea Act, the Coercive Acts, and other provocations had led the colonists to re-examine their position within the empire, they were ready to turn Parliament's response to their own advantage. They denied Parliament's right to tax them. Parliament maintained that the powers of taxation and legislation were inseparable. Very well: Parliament had then no power of legislation! And if this were so, it followed that the colonial assembly had powers of legislation equal to those of Parliament. From the position of institutional and national equality the colonists advanced, under the tutelage of Locke (via Tom Paine), to the position of human equality reflected in the ringing passages of the Declaration of Independence. But the search for principles was not yet ended. It continued throughout the years of fighting and culminated in the adoption of the federal Constitution. It had been, in Morgan's view, "a noble search, a daring search, and by almost any standards a successful" one.

It is unnecessary to observe that the elevated thesis of this widely-praised book rests on a solid substructure of scholarship. For these reasons, and also because of the fine clarity with which the author has achieved a difficult task of compression, I regret to observe that the work is marred by inconsistency and partisanship. Consider the crucial question whether or not the colonies were in real danger of French or Indian attack following the British victory over these nations in 1763. If the danger was an actual one, then the British, whose public debt and domestic tax level had risen to unprecedented heights during the war, were justified in calling upon the colonies after 1763 to contribute to the cost of their own protection. Most historians today agree on the reality of the danger and the justness of the British call (see the editors' introduction to L. H. Gipson's *Coming of the Revolution*). Morgan turns his back upon this agreement, but not entirely upon some of the evidence on which it rests. For while in one place (p. 44) he denies a French peril, he affirms it in another (p. 83): "Ever since the peace of 1763 she [France] had been waiting for opportunities of revenge against Britain. . . ."

Morgan seems to me to display partisanship in his treatment of the efforts of Grenville and North to overcome the colonists' hostility to British taxation. Both suggested that the colonies tax themselves, the North proposal being ratified by Parliament itself. Surely it is inadequate to characterize North's effort as a "gesture . . . vague and undefined" (p. 69) and Grenville's as "only a rhetorical gesture, since he never made known how much he wished each colony to raise" (p. 19). If the colonies opposed taxation without representation on grounds of principle should not one expect them to have explored these opportunities to tax themselves?

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the colonists were in search not of principles but of rationalizations for their unwillingness to pay taxes. If this is not so why did the colonists pay duties on tea and molasses during the period 1770-73? The answer is very probably, as Morgan suggests, that they submitted during these years to taxation without representation because the years were prosperous ones and because the imposts were far fewer and far less burdensome than those they had previously been asked to pay. We may therefore continue to regard them as animated by principle only

if, as Morgan does, we adopt a quantitative view of principle. But I must confess myself unpersuaded by this thesis, more especially because of its tendency to find expression in terms of British black and colonial white, with insufficient shading.

STUART BRUCHEY

Northwestern University

So Fell the Angels. By THOMAS G. and MARVA R. BELDEN. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1956. 401 pp. \$5.

Salmon Portland Chase's insatiable lust for the Presidency is a familiar story in American political history. As Lincoln's Secretary of the Treasury, he is inevitably cast as the villain in the drama, or melodrama, of the wartime cabinet—a devious politician conniving to unseat the man who brought him to power. Similarly, Chase's beautiful daughter, Kate, has been a favorite subject for historians. From the moment she came to Washington in 1861 at the age of twenty to serve as hostess for her widowed father, Kate schemed to put him in the White House and make herself first lady of the land. Her grand design included marriage to the millionaire governor of Rhode Island and later United States Senator, William Sprague. Her reckless ambition brought her the leadership of Capital society, but this same recklessness left her at the age of fifty selling vegetables and delivering eggs in back streets of Washington.

Ambition is the tragic flaw of each of the three protagonists in Thomas G. and Marva R. Belden's *So Fell the Angels*. The authors have essayed a three-faceted biography of Salmon P. Chase, his daughter, and her husband, but it is the strongminded, magnetic Kate who dominates this splendid study. The authors speak of her again and again in superlatives. Kate was "the most brilliant woman who had ever entered the American political scene"; "the nation's most powerful political hostess"; "the most powerful woman in the United States." So impressively have the Beldens marshalled their evidence and so skillfully have they told their story, that the reader is persuaded to agree.

The portraits of the two men, however, are rather less convincing. Salmon P. Chase was a man of contradictions. The authors delineate with keen insight the self-hypnotized Chase, the man who was a coward and a knave, and the man who on the subject of the Presidency was, Lincoln thought, "a little insane." Another side of Chase's character, the statesman Lincoln believed worthy to be named Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court and who, when appointed, honored the office, is less clearly realized. The reader wonders, also, what inner resources of strength such an apparently witless man as William Sprague drew on to survive domestic scandal and political catastrophe until 1915, the last of the Civil War governors.

Although the picture of Kate Chase Sprague and her world in *So Fell the Angels* does not differ substantially from Ishbel Ross's *Proud Kate*

(1953), the Beldens have written a more vividly detailed and fully documented biography.

CHARLES H. BOHNER

University of Delaware

American Fiction, 1851-1875: A Contribution toward a Bibliography. By LYLE H. WRIGHT. San Marino, Cal.: The Huntington Library, 1957. xx, 413 pp. \$7.50.

It is not given to many authors to know that their next work will automatically become a "landmark." Mr. Wright, head of the Reference Department at the Huntington Library, is such a fortunate fellow. His last book, to which this is the successor, *American Fiction . . . 1774-1850* (1939, revised 1948), was at once acclaimed an indispensable reference work, and he must have suspected that such would be the glorious future of this one. All he had to do was exercise infinite patience, infinitesimal scrupulousness, and inordinate curiosity. Happily this is just what he did. As the result social historians—and anyone seriously concerned with the annals of American culture—will fall upon this new book with sharp little cries of delight.

Where the earlier bibliography, as revised, offers 2,772 numbered titles over a 106-year period, the present one offers 2,832 for not quite a quarter century. (This sharp upsurge in publishing activity probably accounts for the absence of that most useful feature of the first volume, a Chronological Index.) This was the period when there appeared on the literary scene such best sellers as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *The Gates Ajar*, or *St. Elmo*; reams of trash by Maturin M. Ballou, George Thompson, or Henry Llewellyn Williams; and, occasionally, some good writing by people like Constance Fenimore Woolson, Theodore Winthrop, or John W. deForest. They are all here, alphabetically by author (694 men, 499 women), with a repository from among eighteen holding libraries for each item located, and a Title Index that takes care of everyone including that sturdy beggar, Anon. One thing Mr. Wright does not supply: a Topical Index. Though he could not fairly be expected to do so, it is a regrettable omission. He does, however—where his titles are unrevealing—append a phrase or so of description; and as the result what a pantechnicon of American life is thrown open to our view! We see Civil War novels and slavery novels; political novels and criminal confessions; anti-Catholic and pro-Mormon novels; novels about Americans in Australia, Chile, Egypt, Germany, and (especially) Italy; novels about women's rights in general or Lowell factory girls in particular; novels on the westward movement, temperance, or Biblical themes; about life at Yale, Harvard, the White Sulphur Springs, or Van Diemen's Land. And of course there are oddities: an allegorical romance about the Civil War written in phonetic spelling (no. 54), or just about the high cost of living during the War (2235); novels praising the virtues

of perfume (556), insurance (2801), or free love (872); even novels warning against incest (2731) or worrying about lesbianism (2413).

These indicia to American popular taste, or the lack thereof, were published in all of the probable cities and in some which are highly improbable, such as Richmond, Indiana, or Rouse's Point, New York. There are also some published in Baltimore. Because Mr. Wright does not give us that Topical Index, this reviewer believes that a listing of all the Maryland items which caught his eye may perhaps be useful. The following fifteen items refer to fiction published under a Baltimore imprint: nos. 371a, 759, 763, 1082, 1361, 1653, 1679, 1696, 1706, 1707, 1793, 2204, 2271, 2459, and 2789. The following ten items have Baltimore and at least one other city on their title pages: nos. 208, 315, 330, 442, 443, 463, 1551, 1573, 1648, and 1708. The following dozen items, not necessarily with Baltimore imprint, are laid partly or wholly in either Baltimore or Maryland: (no. 403) Meshach Browning, *Forty-Four Years of the Life of a Hunter*; (419) Josephine M. Bunkley (pseud.), *The Testimony of an Escaped Novice from the Sisterhood of St. Joseph, Emmettsburg* [sic]; (759) Edwin H. Docwra, *The Devil's Race Course*; (910) Mrs. May Agnes Early Fleming, *Erminie; or, The Gypsy's Vow*; (923) Miriam Fletcher, *The Methodist*; (1177) anon., *The Hermit of the Chesapeake*; (1304) James Hungerford, *The Old Plantation*; (1603) Emily E. J. McAlpine, *Doings in Maryland*; (2183) Mrs. Anne Moncure Crane Seemüller, *Emily Chester: A Novel*; (2346) Harvey Stanley, *Pilate and Herod*; (2437) anon., *Ten Years of Torture; or, Suttin's Death-Bed Confession*; and (2459) Frederick W. Thomas, *An Autobiography of William Russell*.

In describing the Hungerford masterpiece our bibliographer asserts that the action occurs in "Eastern Maryland in the 1830's"—at which point some marginalia become mandatory. Over here in the Free State, Mr. Wright, we have really only two directions. We have a Southern Maryland (better if you capitalize that adjective), and we also have a western Maryland. That we have a northern Maryland is remotely conceivable, and may be admitted for geographical purposes. But "Eastern Maryland" is an out-and-out monstrosity which you must have jerked forth, bellowing, from some bestiary in your Medieval Section. We think you mean "the Eastern Shore," and from that point of reference there is only one direction, viz., off. Either you live down on the Eastern Shore or you live off it, but you never, never live in "Eastern Maryland." Other than this lamentable lapse—which we trust will be corrected in his Revised Edition—Mr. Wright is definitely the Mr. Right of American fictional bibliography. His book is worth every penny of its price.

CURTIS CARROLL DAVIS

Baltimore

Diary of Titian Ramsay Peale. Edited by CLIFFORD MERRILL DRURY, with an introduction and bibliography by CARL S. DENTZEL. Early California Travel Series XXXVI. Los Angeles: Glen Dawson, 1957.

This attractive booklet reprints the diary of Titian Ramsay Peale, the versatile youngest son of Charles Willson Peale, from September 22 to November 1, 1841. During the years 1838 to 1842 the author was attached, as its principal artist, to the United States Exploring Expedition to the South Sea and Northwest Coast of the United States. The period covered by the diary is that between the wreck of the *Peacock* in the mouth of the Columbia River and the author's sailing from San Francisco on the *Vincennes*. It pleasantly describes the journey of the members of the Expedition from Oregon to San Francisco.

The lengthy introduction (25 pages against only 42 pages for the entire Diary) giving the life of Peale and the background and accomplishments of the Expedition, is perhaps more interesting than what it introduces. The Diary is embellished with reprints of illustrations from the Narrative of the Expedition by Charles Wilkes, published in 1845, and by other contemporary prints or watercolors, those on the covers being taken from natural history illustrations by the author, and a view of the Rockies reproduced in color, being also by him. His portrait, believed to be by his father, Charles Willson Peale, of which the plate was supplied by the Maryland Historical Society, shows an attractive young man of whom it is easy to believe what the commander of the Expedition said of him, that he "is very proud . . . and is difficult to manage." He was born in Philadelphia on November 17, 1799, and followed the standard Peale career of painting, usually in connection with the publication of natural history books. He also acted as a curator and ultimately manager of his father's museum. After its sale he spent the remainder of the active part of his life as an examiner in the Patent Office in Washington.

DOUGLAS GORDON

Baltimore

The New-York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists in America, 1564-1860. By GEORGE C. GROCE and DAVID H. WALLACE. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957. xxvii, 759 pp. \$15.

There can be scarcely any serious student of American art who has not had occasion, during the past decade, to consult Dr. George C. Groce in Washington, for in Dr. Groce's massive files was growing the largest and most trustworthy compendium of biographical information on American artists that has ever existed. All of us who have had to impose upon Dr. Groce personally have been looking forward with him to the day when

his monumental task would reach that sort of completion—such a job is never truly finished, as Dr. Groce is the first to know—represented by publication. At long last, the day has come, and the book has appeared in suitably handsome format; there is not a research scholar, antiquarian, curator, collector or dealer who will not be consulting it many times a week.

The need for such a volume has existed for years now, for research has been adding rapidly to the information included in the invaluable compendia of Smith and of Mantle Fielding. The story of the creation of the present book, therefore, is not without a certain interest.

The work had its genesis in 1940, with Groce's publication of *1440 Early American Portrait Artists*, a well-documented biographical compendium assembled under the aegis of the New Jersey Historical Records Survey of the W. P. A. (it is curious to note that only now, as in the case of the Index of American Design, are we feeling the full benefits of the less publicized, more serious historical enterprises of the much-maligned—often deservedly so—W. P. A.). In 1941 Dr. Groce, under further W. P. A. auspices, expanded his lists to include some 3,000 portrait artists in all; with the demise of his sponsoring organization, and the war, his manuscript was turned over to the New-York Historical Society for editing and publication.

After the war, Dr. Groce and Charles E. Baker, Editor of the Society, decided to expand the work to include artists other than portraitists, so that the present volume covers all recorded American painters, engravers, lithographers, draftsmen, amateur sketchers, silhouette-cutters, sculptors, wax-modelers, figurehead-carvers, cameo-cutters, seal-cutters, and medalists, as well as some names only identified as "artist" in contemporary directories. Discrimination in this matter was arduous, as the authors point out, since some of those so identified were proven to be "musicians, actors, and photographers, and, it is suspected, even prostitutes." Where such "artists" can be shown, through other evidence, to be inadmissible, their names have been omitted; otherwise, for safety's sake, they are included.

The final stage of completion of the book began in 1952, when David H. Wallace, Assistant Editor of the Society, assumed the demanding task of putting together the massive documentation. The final result is a credit to all the many individuals concerned, as researchers, editors, and writers, as well as the hundreds of institutions and individuals who supplied data. The *Dictionary*, as it stands, contains between ten and eleven thousand entries, some seven times the total previously available. Already the results for our knowledge of American art of this coordination of information begin to be evident.

The book's usefulness is, of course, primarily in its biographical listings, together with the keyed source list (in itself an unprecedented bibliography of American art research from the biographical standpoint); but no one can afford to overlook the lucid and utterly objective Introduction, which gives an explanation of the scope of the *Dictionary*; a splendid analysis of the sources used; and a brief but stimulating section on the "Use of the Dictionary" which has already sent this reviewer off on several profitable forays.

It is rarely that one can point to such a thoroughly satisfactory completion of so complex an enterprise—an enterprise which often must have seemed a thankless and endless one—but such is the case with this *Dictionary*. We have only one thing to add: while appreciating that reasons of volume alone were enough to demand the limiting dates of *this* book, when can we hope to see the sequel which will carry on the splendid work, at least to the year 1900?

JAMES D. BRECKENRIDGE

The Baltimore Museum of Art

Robert Oliver, Merchant of Baltimore, 1783-1819. By STUART WEEMS BRUCHEY. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, series LXXIV, no. 1, 1956. 411 pp. \$5.

The life of Robert Oliver would have been an inspiration to Horatio Alger. Arriving in Baltimore in 1783, a penniless Irish immigrant, Oliver died a wealthy and influential citizen, ranked with Alexander Brown and William Patterson as one of the "royal merchants of Baltimore." He began his commercial career as a small-scale commission merchant, ended it as part of a successful scheme to empty the Mexican Treasury of its gold, and meanwhile became, literally, a millionaire—no mean achievement in 1809.

Mr. Bruchey's first sentence, "This is the story of a man's business," indicates the emphasis and purpose of this book. It is a meticulous account of the way in which a Baltimore merchant conducted his business and made his fortune, based primarily on twenty-seven volumes of Oliver's business records in the Maryland Historical Society. The significance of this study is two-fold. It makes a substantial contribution to our knowledge of American commercial operations of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It also demonstrates how American merchants survived and prospered in a particularly uncertain economic period.

The author presents Oliver's career largely in terms of the three partnerships through which he worked from 1783 to 1809. Although information on the first, Oliver & Simm, which lasted from 1783 to 1785, is scanty, the firm prospered sufficiently to leave Oliver with £1,000 to invest in his next partnership with another Irish immigrant, Hugh Thompson.

The first years of Oliver & Thompson, during the general postwar economic slump, were not easy. Diversifying their interests, they concentrated on commission work, while investing in insurance and shipping, and exporting some goods on their own account when profits beckoned. In 1789, earnings were divided and Oliver received £3,336. Seven years later when the partnership was dissolved, division of earnings ultimately brought Oliver £60,000 or almost \$160,000—a jump in profits that reflected the opportunities presented to neutral American merchants by the outbreak of

war in Europe in 1793. For Oliver & Thompson these opportunities centered in the West Indies where Britain and France, unable to supply their colonies, opened ports closed to American shipping since the Revolution. Threading their way between French and English shipping regulations with luck, bribery, false papers, and occasional seizures, Oliver & Thompson specialized in importing coffee from French Santo Domingo, which they re-exported with obvious profit, to Europe.

In 1796 Robert Oliver joined two brothers in a third partnership. Their first years, coinciding with a depression in American trade caused by the threat of war with France and the conclusion of peace in Europe, were relatively lean. As soon as war resumed in 1803, however, they re-entered the West Indian coffee trade, and in the next two years made a profit of approximately \$185,000.

Large as this sum might seem, it soon paled beside the returns from their next and most spectacular trading venture. In 1805 the Olivers obtained one of the licences issued by Spain allowing neutrals to trade with her South American colonies, and they began sending goods regularly to Vera Cruz. The following year this trade brought Oliver into an audacious project in international finance. An agreement between Napoleon and the King of Spain enabled the French banker Ouvrard, acting with other European financial interests, to monopolize all commerce with the Spanish American colonies and to remove the Spanish gold and silver stored in Mexico. To get this specie to Europe in the normal channels of trade it was decided to convert it into American owned goods; at this point Oliver entered the plan. The details of his role are too complicated to relate here, and make too good a story to spoil by compression. Suffice it to say that in 1808, after eighteen months, the Olivers had made \$775,000, with which sum they were content to retire from active trade the following year.

The general reader may suspect, but only those who have worked with business records can fully appreciate, the energy and care with which Mr. Bruchey has tackled the Oliver papers and the skill with which he has analysed and presented their contents. Much of the author's success in reconstructing Oliver's career is due to his knowledge of early nineteenth century bookkeeping which enabled him to compile the statistics that are vital to this kind of study but frequently impossible to obtain. The discussions of bookkeeping techniques may occasionally seem too detailed to some readers, but they are of great value for students of business history.

One of the most interesting facets of this study is Mr. Bruchey's emphasis on the reasons behind Robert Oliver's business decisions. Oliver was a cautious man, but he made his fortune by changing the scope and nature of his trading operations to fit changing circumstances. What lay behind his decisions in this area? The attempt to answer this question leads the author throughout the book first, to consider the influence of Oliver's family and business associates at home and abroad who provided information, advice, and sometimes capital for his ventures; and second,

to analyse the effect of broad economic developments in Baltimore, the United States, and Europe.

In view of the larger backdrop against which Oliver's business is thus constantly seen it is regrettable that the author in his final analysis summarized Oliver's activities and ethics in terms of the resident merchant of earlier centuries. If such a summary were needed, a comparison with other British and American merchants engaged in foreign trade during the same period would have been far more meaningful.

This reviewer had two regrets on finishing *Robert Oliver*. The first was that Oliver the man remained so shadowy a figure—a fact that may have been unavoidable due to the scarcity of personal material available. The second was that the study ended with Oliver's withdrawal from trade in 1809. Although it was not the author's intent to go beyond Oliver's active career in foreign trade, it would be interesting and valuable to know how he used his fortune from 1809 to his death in 1834. We may hope that in the future Mr. Bruchey will provide the answer to this question.

RHODA M. DORSEY

Goucher College

Archives of Maryland, Volume LXVII. Proceedings of the Provincial Court of Maryland, 1677-1678. Edited by ELIZABETH MERRITT. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1956. xxxv, 497 pp. \$5, members \$3.

As the writer of a recent review article on "The Publication of the Official Records of the Southern Colonies" (Jack P. Greene in the *William and Mary Quarterly*, April, 1957) has pointed out,

One of the most impressive publication records belongs to Maryland, the first of the southern states to launch a comprehensive program for the printing of its official colonial records. In 1882 the state legislature provided means and authority for the Maryland Historical Society to print the state's early records. Accordingly, the first volume of the *Archives of Maryland* appeared in the following year. In the seventy-five years since that date, under the successive editorships of William Hand Browne, Clayton C. Hall, Bernard C. Steiner, J. Hall Pleasants, Raphael Semmes, and Elizabeth Merritt, sixty-six volumes have been produced, a sixty-seventh is nearing completion, and a sixty-eighth is in preparation. . . . The whole series, particularly after the first few volumes, is marked by sound editing, a literal reproduction of the manuscript page, and a thorough job of indexing. It is doubtful if the published records of any other southern state excel those of Maryland either in quantity or quality.

This volume, the sixty-seventh in the *Archives of Maryland* series, will be the last to bear the signature of the late J. Hall Pleasants, who edited this series from 1929 to 1944 and who from that time until his death in August, 1957, served as chairman of the Publications Committee of the Maryland Historical Society. As the fourth of the six editors of the *Archives* and later as chairman of the Publications Committee, Dr. Pleasants for more than a quarter of a century contributed greatly to the steady production and high standards of the *Archives of Maryland*. He will be missed.

The present volume is the twelfth in the sub-series devoted to the records of the Provincial Court and the third in that group to be edited by Dr. Elizabeth Merritt. Aside from prefatory matter, a table of cases, and a comprehensive index, this volume consists of a twenty-five page introduction and a literal transcription in 457 printed pages of some 367 pages of the original manuscript proceedings of the Provincial Court between June 19, 1677, and June 18, 1678. In this one year period the court met six times but proceeded to business on only five occasions. Bad weather in December, 1677, prevented the attendance of a sufficient number of justices to make a court.

Because of the restricted period of time involved and perhaps even more because of the increasingly formal procedure of the Provincial Court, the important cases and colorful goings-on often recorded in some of the earlier volumes of Provincial Court Proceedings are lacking in this volume. Heinous crimes were also conspicuous by their absence, and the only criminal case which came to trial, an information against a sheriff for taking exorbitant fees, terminated in an acquittal. The time of the court was taken up with a variety of civil actions, predominantly suits for the recovery of debts but including such diverse matters as the treatment of indentured servants and the ownership of a feather bed. The editor has made judicious comments on a number of these cases, but as she has so wisely stated in her introduction, "Not all of the cases which have in them something of interest can be commented on here, or the introduction would be as long as the text."

Many of the hundreds of civil cases on the docket in this year never came to trial at all, and others were continued from court to court and finally beyond the date of this volume. Of those cases which were heard and decided, a great number were actions for the recovery of bonded debts. It would be easy to discount the value of publishing *in extenso* the formal records of a court in which so many cases never came to trial and in which so many of those that did involved simply the recovery of so many pounds of "good bright & large aronoco tobacco." It would be easy, but it would also be a mistake. Only a historian of the Provincial Court itself could be expected to work through the manuscript from which this volume has been printed; for almost every other student, publication is the only satisfactory way to make this valuable source available.

In spite of the increasingly formal procedure of the Court and language of the pleadings, this volume will interest the historian of almost every aspect of seventeenth century Maryland. The legal historian, of course,

will be grateful for a further prolongation of what is already the longest continuous series of published records for the superior court in any of the thirteen colonies; and he will find throughout this volume new or interesting data on the development of the law in Maryland. The political historian will pick up faint echoes here of the Indian troubles and domestic unrest (related to Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia) which disturbed the peace of Maryland in 1675 and 1676. The sheriff of Calvert County, for example, petitioned for reimbursement of the costs of "... executeing Severall Speciall writts and warrants upon the Insurrectors at the Clifts ..." (pp. 96-97); and in April, 1678, the Court determined the damages suffered by the Lord Proprietary from the concealment of "... divers goods & Chattels formerly belonging to W^m Davis deceased who was convicted attainted & executed for feloniously raising warr insurrecon & rebellion ag^t his Lordpp ..." (p. 248). The administrative historian will be reminded that the Provincial Court, like the county courts, fulfilled executive and administrative as well as judicial functions. On April 11, 1678, the justices of the Provincial Court ordered the justices of the peace for St. Mary's and Charles counties to agree on repairing the highway at a mill "att the head of Wiccommico river betwixt St Maryes & Charles County," and on the same day, the justices of the Provincial Court, as members of the Council, told the Emperor of the Nanticokes (with whom there had been some trouble shortly before) "... that he might plant corne and eat his bread in peace & quietnesse Provided that he observe & keepe the last Articles of peace and amity concluded upon with Col W^m Burges" (pp. 247, 248).

Social and economic historians, however, will perhaps make more use of these court records than anyone else. One scholar has recently used the records of the Provincial Court for an article on social status and mobility in seventeenth-century Maryland, and as the articles of V. J. Wyckoff have shown, these records can provide a great deal of information for the economic historian. Here, for example, is evidence of the value of tobacco in 1677 (p. 36), of the commission customarily allowed for collecting tobacco debts (pp. 71, 76), and of the freight charges on shipping tobacco to England in 1667 (p. 404). On almost every page is overwhelming proof that tobacco was not only the usual medium of payment but also the most frequent measure of costs and values. The awkwardness of tobacco as a medium of payment and the great scarcity of coin in Maryland at this time perhaps go far to account for the prevalence both of credit dealings and of the litigation between debtors and creditors which fills so much of this volume.

Having barely suggested the riches to be found in this sixty-seventh volume of the *Archives*, the reviewer refers the curious and the studious to the record itself and commends the editor and the printers for the faithful accomplishment of a most exacting task.

JOHN M. HEMPHILL, II

Colonial Williamsburg

NOTES AND QUERIES

Rodgers—Likenesses of Col. and Mrs. John Rodgers, parents of Commodore John Rodgers of War of 1812 fame, are being sought by Friends of Rodgers' Tavern, an organization devoted to the restoration of Rodgers' Tavern, where the Colonel was frequently host to Washington and operated the Lower Susquehanna Ferry at what is now Perryville. Suitable portraits are needed for the Tavern. Rodgers, often referred to as "Captain," organized in 1775 the 5th Company of militia in "the flying corps" which marched north to help Washington at the beginning of the Revolution. Rodgers moved from Harford County to Cecil about 1780 where he lived until his death in 1794. Information may be sent to the society at Perryville, Md.

Thackara—I request information of any manuscript, art object or other material of the Thackara brothers: James (engraver), William, Jr. (master plasterer), or Samuel (sea captain and ship chandler). They lived in Philadelphia in the period 1770-1840. William, Jr., was plasterer for many of the buildings of Benjamin Henry Latrobe and William Strickland. I am also completing a genealogy of the Thackara Family and would appreciate word from any possible descendants in the Maryland area.

ROBERT DONALD CROMPTON,
Glenside, Pa.

Griffin—I want the name of Rachel, wife of Philip Griffin of Baltimore County and Baltimore, married about 1775. Presumably this is the same Philip Griffin who married (2) Eleanor McMullin, Sept. 10, 1805, at the First M. E. Church, Baltimore.

ROBERT GRIFFIN SMITH,
487 Union Ave., Laconia, N. H.

Hawkins—Smith—Hamilton—Scott—Information on the Hawkins family and descendants would be appreciated. Also I desire the parents' names of Col. John Smith of Calvert Co., Md., who died Oct. 5, 1759, and whose will was probated in 1759. He is no doubt descended from Richard Smith. The crest on the old family silver is a hand holding a quill, above a helmet esquire. Information is also desired on ancestry of Dr. John Hamilton and Mary Scott.

MRS. EDGAR HULL,
1423 First St., New Orleans 13, La.

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Index—The annual index to the *Maryland Historical Magazine* is available to members or subscribers upon request and without charge. It is generally ready in March.

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